

THE  
PLEASANT HISTORY  
OF  
Thomas of Reading,



OR,  
The six worthy Yeoman of the West.

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Corrected and enlarged by T. D.

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*Thou that to reade the Title do'st begin,  
Turn over leafe and see what is within.*



LONDON,  
Printed for William Thackeray, and are to be sold at  
his Shop in Duck-Lane 1672.

THE  
PLEASANT HISTORY  
OF  
A HOUSE OF READING

The first worthy Yewer of the Well.

Corrected and enlarged by T. D.

Printed in the City of London  
at the Shop of the Author in the Strand

1711

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Printed for William Trenchard, and are to be sold at  
his Shop in Duke Lane 1672.

The Preface or Prologue, to the kind  
and courteous Readers.

**S**IX worthy Teomen lived in the West,  
Whose honoured Actions Heaven most sweetly blest:  
Clothiers they were, and had exceeding skill,  
Lands, livings, goods, and wit they had at will:  
And with their goods, such good those men have done,  
Never the like was known beneath the Sun:  
Thomas of Reading was the first mans name,  
And Gray of Gloucester next unto the same:  
Sutton of Salisbury, and of Woker Towne,  
Fitzallengut all other Clothiers downe:  
Thomas Dove of Exceter, a gallant blade,  
Which long had practised the clothing Trade:  
Simon of Southampton was known as them,  
To be a Partner with those honest men:  
Yet let me not forget three of the North,  
Clothiers they were, of credit and good worth:  
Cutbert of Kendall had a good report,  
Both of the rich, and of the poorer sort:  
Hodghkins of Hallifax was knowne also,  
And well beloved where ever he did go:  
Bryon of Manchester a man well blest,  
Might be compar'd with any of the rest:  
Now having told their names, and who they were,  
More news of them I purpose to declare:  
That all the Christian World may understand,  
What good and profit they did for England;

Your wel-wisher, L. P.

## The pleasant Historie of the six worthy Yeomen of the West.



**I**n the dayes of King Henry the first, who was the first King that instituted the high Court of Parliament, there liued nine men, which for the trade of Cloathing, were famous throughtout all England. which Art in those dayes was held in high reputation, both in respect of the great riches that thereby was gotten, as also of the benefit it brought to the whole Common-wealth: the younger Sons of Knights & Gentlemen, to whom their Fathers would leaue no lands, were most commonly preferred to learn this trade, to the end that thereby they might liue in good estate, and dize forth their dayes in prosperitie.

Among all Crafts this was the only chiefe, for that it was the greatest merchandize, by the which our Country became famous throughtout all Nations: and it was verily thought, that the one half of the people in the land liued in those dayes thereby, and in such good sort, that in the Common-wealth, there were few or no beggers at all: poor people whom God highly blessed with most children, did by meanes of this occupation so order them, that by the time that they were come to be six or seven years of age, they were able to get their own bread: Idleness was banished our coast, so that it was a rare thing to hear of a thief in those dayes. Therefore it was not without cause that Clothiers were then both honoured and loved, among whom these nine persons in this Kings dayes were of great credit, viz. Tho. Cole of Reading, Gray of Gloucester, Sutton of Salisbury, Fitzallen of Worcester, (commonly called William of Worcester) Tom. Dove of Excester, and Simon of Southampton, alias Supbroth: who were by the King called, The six worthy husbands of the West. Then were there three liuing in the North, that is to say, Cuthbert of Kendall, Hodgkins of Hallifax, and Martin Bryer of Manchester, Every one of these kept a great number of Serbants at work, Spinners, Carders, Weavers, Fullers, Dyers, Sheeremen, and Kowlers, to the great admiration of all those that came into their houses to behold them.



of Thomas of Reading.

So to you shall understand these gallant Clothiers, by reason of their dwelling places, separated themselves in three several companies: Gray of Gloucester, William of Worcester, and Thomas of Reading, because their journey to London was all one way, they conversed commonly together: And Dove of Exeter, Sutton of Saltsburie, and Simon of Southampton, they in like sort kept company the one with the other, making ever altogether at Basing-Stoke: and the three Northerne Clothiers did the like, who commonly did not meet till they came to Bosoms Inn in London.

Moreover, for the love and delight that these Westerne men had each in others company, they did so provide, that their Wains and themselves would ever meet upon a day in London at Jarrats Hall, furnished the Spant, for that he surpassed all other men of that age, both in stature and strength: whose meriments and memorable deeds, I will set down unto you in this following discourse.

How King Henry sought the favour of all his Subjects, especially of the Clothiers. Chap. I.

**T**his King Henry, who for his great learning and wisdom was called Beaucerk, being the third Son to the renowned Conquerour: after the death of his Brother Wil. Rufus, took upon him the Government of this Land, in the absence of his elder Brother Robert Duke of Normandie, who at this time was at Wars among the Infidels, and was chosen King of Jerusalem, the which he, for the love he bare to his own Countrey, refused, and with great honour returned from the holy Land of whose committing when King Henry understood knowing he would make claime to the Crown, sought by all means possible to win the good will of his Nobility, and to get the favoe of the Commons, by courtisie: for the obtaining whereof he did them many labours, thereby the better to strengthen himself against his Brother.

It chanced on a time, as he with one of his Sons, and others of his Nobility, rode from London towards Wales, to appease the fury of the Welshmen, which then began to raise themselves in arms against his authority, that he met with a great number of Wains laden with Cloth coming to London, and seeing them fill by the one after another so many together, demanded whose they were: the Wainie men answered in this sort: Coles of Reading (quoth they). Then by and by the King asked another saying: whose cloth is all this: Old Coles quoth he: and again anon after he asked the

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same question of others, and still they answered old Cole. And 'tis to be remembred that the King met them in such a place so narrow and straight, that he with the rest of his traine, were faine to stand close to the hedge, whilst the carts passed by, the which at that time being in number aboue twohundred, was nere hand an houre ere the King could get roome to be gone: so that by this long stay he began to be displeased, although the admiration of that sight did much qualifie his furie; but breaching out in discontent, by reason of his stay, he said, I thought old Cole had got a Commission for all the Carts in the Countrey, to carry his Cloth. And when if he habe quord one of the wainmen) doth that griebe you good Sir, Men, good Sir, said our King, what say you to that? The felloe seeing the King (in asking that question) to bend his browes though he knew not what he was, yet heing abasht he answered thus: why Sir if you be angry, nobody can binder you; for possible Sir, you habe anger at commandment. The King seeing him in uttering of his words, to quether and quake, laught heartily at him, as well in respect of his simple answer, as at his fear; and so soon after the last wain went by, which gave present passage unto him and his Doobles, and thereupon entering into communication of the commoditie of clathing the King gave order at his home requene, to have old Cole brought before his Majestie, to the intent he might have conference with him, noting him to be a subject of great abilitie; but by that time he came within a mile of Stanton he met another company of wainmen in like sort laden with cloth, whereby the King was driven into a further admiration and demanding whose they were answer was made in this sort: They be good-man Suttons of Wallsbury good Sir, and by that time a score of them were past he asked again, saying: whose are these, Suttons of Wallsbury quoth they, and so still as often as the King asked that question, they answered Suttons of Wallsbury. God send me many such Suttons saith the King. And thus the farther he travelled Westward, more wainmen he met continually: upon which occasion he said to his Doobles, that it would never griebe a King to, one for the defence of a fertile Countrey and faithful subjects. - I alwayes thought (quoth he) that Englande below was more then her wealth, yet now I see her wealth sufficient to maintain her valour, which I will see to the risk in all I may, and which my charge keep my self in possession of what I have, Kings and Nobles can be no partners: and therefore let my Lord her Robber think, that although he was Duke to England by birth, yet I am King by possession: All his labourers I must account

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count my loss, and will serve them as I did the ungrateful Earl of Shrewsbury, whose lands I have seized and banished his body, but now he will lead the King to his journey into Wales, and waiting his home returne: in the mean time, tell you the meeting of the Clothiers at London.

How William of Worcester, Gray of Gloucester, and old Cole of Reading, met all together at Reading, and of their communication by the way as they rode to London. Chap. II.

**W**hen Gray of Gloucester, and William of Worcester were come to Reading, according to their custome they alwayes called old Cole to have his company to London, who also duly attended their coming having provided a good breakfast for them: and when they had well refreshed themselves, they rode their horses and rode on towards the Citie: and in their journey William of Worcester asked them if they had not heard of the Earl of Moray his escape out of the Land: what he heerd, quoth Gray? I must much at this manner, being in such great regard to the King as he was: but I pray you, do not you know the cause of his going, quoth Cole? The common report, quoth Gray, is this, that the covetous Earle, who through a greedy desire, never left begging of the King for one thing or other, and his request being now denied him, of more obduracy and wilful stubbornness hath banished himself out of the Land, and quite forsaken the Countrey of Cornwall, having made a holy pilgrimage to see how within England again, and as report goes he told the late banished Earl of Shrewsbury, have joyed themselves with Robert Duke of Exmouth, against the King, the which action of the late banished King's loyalty, that their Ladies with their children, are quite turned out of doores, succourless and friendless, so that it is to be seen, they wander up and down the Countrey like forlorn people and although many do pity them, yet few do relieve them. lamentable hearing quoth William of Worcester, and with that casting their eyes after they espied Tom. Dove with the rest of his Companions come riding to meet them, who as soon as they were come thither fell into such pleasant discourses, as old Warren the long way they had to Colebrook, where always at their coming towards London they staid, and being once entered into their Mine, according to old custome, good cheer was provided for them: for these Clothiers were the chiefest guests that travelled along the way: and this was as sure as an act of Parliament that Thomas Dove could not

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not digest his meat without musick, nor drinke wine without women so that his hostesse being a merry wench, would often times call in two or three of her neighbours wives to keep him company, toberere they parted they were made as pleasant as Pies. And this being a continual custome amongst them when they came thither: at length the womens husbands began to take exceptions at their wives going thither: toberereupon great controverisie grew between them, in such sort, that they were most restrained: then they had most desire to work their wills: now gye (quoth they) must we be so tyed to our task that we may not drinke with our friends: sitte we upon these yellowe holes, till no other ope serve your turn: have we thus long bin your wives, and do you now mistrust us: verily you eat too much salt, and that makes you grow cholericke bad libers judge all others the like, but in faith you shall not trouble us so like asses, but we will go to our friends when we are sent for: and do you what you can. Well quoth their husbands, if you be so headstrong, we will tame you: it is the duty of honest women to obey their husbands saying. And of honest men (quoth they) to thinke well of their wives, but who do sooner impeach their credit, then their husbands, charging them if they do but smile that they are subtil: and if they do but wink, they account them willes, if sad of countenance, then fullen; if they be forward, then they are counted shrews: and the worst if they be gentle: if a woman keep her house, then you will say she is melancholy; if she walk abroad, then you call her a gadder; a Puritane, if she be precise; and a wanton if she be pleasant: so there is no woman in the world that knows how to please you: that we thinke our selves accurst to be married wives; living with so many woes. These men, of whose company you forwarne us, are (for ought that ever was saw) both honest and courteous and in wealth far beyond your selves: then what reason is there, why we should restrainge to hinder them: is their good will so much to be requited with scorn, that their cost may not be counterbailed with our company: if a woman be disposed to play light of love, alas alas; do you thinke that you can prevent her? For we will abide by it: that the restraint of liberty forces women to be lewd: for where a woman cannot be trusted, she cannot thinke her self beloved, and if not beloved, what cause hath she to care for such a one: therefore husbands, reform your opinions, and do not touch your own wives with our discredit. The Clergy, we tell you, are idle fellows, and but in respect of our courtships, they would leave your company: The men bragging their wives so well to plead for themselves, knew

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knew not how to answer, but said they would put these burdens on their consciences, if they dealt unjustly with them; and so left them to their own wills. The women having thus conquered their husbands conceits, would not leave the labour of their friends for frowns, and as above the rest Tom Dove was the most pleasantest, so was he had in most reputation with the women, who for his sake made this song:

Welcome to Towne, Tom Dove, Tom Dove,  
The merriest man alive;  
Thy company still we love, we love,  
God grant thee well to thrive,  
And never will depart from thee,  
For better or worse, my joy,  
For thou shalt still have our good will,  
Gods blessing on my sweet boy.

This song went up and down through the whole Country, and at length became a dance among the common sort; so that Tom Dove, for his mirth and good fellowship, was famous in every place. Now when they came to London, they were welcome to the East India Company, and as soon as they were alighted, they were saluted by the Merchants, who waited their coming thither; and always prepared for them a costly supper, where they commonly made their bargain, and upon every bargain made, they still used to send some tokens to the Clothiers wives. The next morning they went to the Hall, where they met the Northern Clothiers, who greeted one another in this sort: What, my Masters of the West, well met: what cheer? what cheer? Then the best cheer our Merchants could make us. (qd. Gray) Then you could not chuse but farewell, quoth Hodgkins, and you be weary of our company, adieu, quoth Sutton. Not so, said Martin, but shall we not have a game ere we go? Per saith for an hundred pounds, well said old Cole, said they: and with that Cole and Gray went to the dice with Martin and Hodgkins; and the dice running on Hodgkins side, Coles money began to waste. Now by the space, qd. Cole, my money shinks as bad as Northern Cloth. But they recovered again the money that Cole had lost; But while they were thus playing, the rest being delighted in contrary matters, every man satisfied his own humour.

Tom Dove called for murther William of Worcester for wine. Sutton for his delight in hearing merry tales, Simon Southampton got him



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him into the kitchen and to the portage pot he goes, for he esteemed more a mass of portage, then of a venison pasty. Now Sir, Cutbert of Mendall was of another minde for no meat pleased him so well as mutton, such as was laced in a red petticoat. And you shall understand that alwayes when they went to dice, they got into Bosomes Inne, which was so called of his name that kept it, who being a foul sloven, went alwayes with his nose in his bosome, and one hand in his pocket, the other on his staff, figuring forth a description of cold winter: for he alwayes wore two coats, two caps, two or three pare of stockings, and a high pare of shoes: over the which he drew on a great pare of lined slippers and yet would he oft complain of cold; wherefore of all men generally he was called old Bosome, and his house Bosomes Inne.

This lump of cold ice had lately married a young wife, who was as toily as she was wanton, and in her company did Cutbert only delight and the better to make passage to his love, he would often thus commune with her: I muse good wife quoth he. Good wife quoth she: Merily Sir, in mine one opinion there is none good but God, and therefore call me Spinster, Then said Cutbert fair Spinster, I have often mused that you being a proper woman could find in your heart for to match with such a greazie Carle as this an evil mannered mate, a foul lump of kitchenstuff, and such a one as is indeed a scorn of men: how can you like him that all women mislike: or love such a loathsome creature: methinks verily it should grieve you to lend him a kiss: much more to let him kiss you. In deed Sir quoth she, I had but hard fortune in this respect, but my friends would have it so, and truly my liking and my love toward him are alike, he never had the one, nor never shall get the other: yet I may say to you, before I married him, there were divers proper young men that were suitors unto me, who loved me as their lives: and glad was he that could get my company, those were my golden dayes, wherein my pleasure abounded, but these years of care and grief, wherein my sorrows exceed. Now no man regards me, no man cares for me, but to speak the truth, who dares shew it: and this is a double grief, he carries over me so jealous a minde, that I cannot look at a man but presently he accuseth me of inconstancy although, I protest to the contrary.

And in truth so, Cutbert he should have cause to complain for some that, were I as you. As sure as I live and so be shall, quoth she, if he do not change his dyas, Cutbert hearing her say so, began to grow further in requesting her favour, wishing he might be her servant and

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and secret friend, and the better to obtain his desire, he gave her others gifts, in so much that she began somewhat to listen unto him; and albeit she liked well of his speeches, yet would she blame him: and take him up very short sometimes for the same, till in the end, Curbert shewed himself to be desperate: saying he would drown himself, rather then live in her disdain. O my sweet heart, not so quoth she, God forbid I should be the death of any man: Comfort thy self kind Curbert, and take this kiss in token of further kindness, and if thou wilt have my labour, thou must be wise and circumspect and in my Husbands sight, I would alwayes have thee to find fault with my doings, blame my bad husbandry dispraise my person, and take exceptions at every thing; whereby he will be as well pleased, as Simon of Southampton with a mess of pottage.

Dear mistress quoth he, I will fulfill your charge to the uttermost: so that you will not take my J. K. in earnest. She answered, I by soullest speeches I will esteem the fairest, and take every dispraise to be a praise from thee, turning each word to the contrary: and so for this time adieu good Curb. For supper time drawes nêr and it is met for me to look to my meat. With that down comes old Wosome calling his wife, saying, Is Winifred is supper ready? they have done playing above: therefore let the Chamberlain cover the Tables. By and by Husband, quoth she, it shall be done straight way. How now my Masters who wins quoth Curbert? Our money walkes to the West, quoth Martin: Cole hath won 40. pounds of me, and Gray hath gotten twell: the best is quoth Hodgkins they will pay for our supper, then let us have good shize of sack, quoth Saiton. Content said Cole, for I promise you, I strive not to grow rich by Dice-playing therefore call for what you will, I will pay for all. Pea said Simon! Chamberlain, I pay the bz:ng a whole bottle of pottage for me. Now Tom Dove had all the fiddlers at a beck of his finger, which follow him up and down the City, as diligent as a little Chicken after a Wen, and made a how that they should want no Musick. And at that time there lived in London a Musitian of great reputation, named Rejor, who kept his Servants in such costly Garments, that they might seem to come before any Prince. Their Coats were all of one colour; and it is said, that afterward the Nobility of this Land, noting it for a seemly sight, used in like manner to keep their men all in one livery. This Rejor was the most skillfull Musitian that lived at that time, whose wealth was very great, so that all the Instruments whereon his Servants plaid, were richly garnished with Rubbs of silver, and some gold: the bows belonging to their



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Colines were all liketoles of pure silver. He was also for his wisdom called to great office in the City, who also bisshed (at his own cost, the Priory and Hospitall of S. Bartholmew in Smithfield. His servants being the best consozts in the City were by Tom Dove appointed to play befoze the young Princes. When supper being brought to the board, they all sat down, and by and by after comes up their Wait, who took his place among them: and anon after the good wife in a red petticoat and a waistcoat, comes among them as white as a Lilly: saying, my Masters, you are welcome, I pray you be merry. Thus falling close to their meat, when they had well fed, they found leisure to talk one with another: at what time Cutb. began thus to find fault, I wis, my Wait, quoth he, you have a wise huswife to your wife, here is meat dyed of a new fashion: God sends meat, and the Devil sends Cooks. Why what ailes the meat, quoth she, serves it not your turns: better men then your self are content with all, but a poultry companion is too ill to please. A way you fluttish thing, qu. Cutbert, your Husband hath a sweet Jewel of you: I marvel such a grave ancient man would match himself with such a young giglot that hath as much handsomeness in her, as good huswifery, which is just nothing at all. Well sir, said she, in regard of my Husbonds presence I am loath to aggravate anger, otherwise I would tell thee thy own. So to, what needs all this quoth the company: in good faith, Cutbert you are too blame, you find fault where none is. Lush, I must speak my mind, quoth Cutbert, I cannot dissemble, I trust the good man thinks never the worse of me: so I have his good will, what the foul evil care I for his wives. Enough, quoth Tom Dove, let us with musick remove these babbles, we mean to be merry; and not melancholy. Then said old Cole, Now trust me, Cutbert, we will have your Masters and you friends ere we part: here woman I drink to you, and regard not his toasts, for he is babbling wheresoever he comes. Quoth the woman: Nothing grieves me so much, as that he should thus openly check me: if he had found any thing amiss: he might have spied a better time to tell me of it then now. I wis he need not thrust my bad huswifery into my Husbonds head: I like not so quietly with him, God wot; and with that she wept. Come Cutbert, quoth they, drink to her, and shake hands and be friends Come on, you pulling baggage, quoth he, I drink to you, here will you pledge me and shake hands: No, (quoth she) I will not shake hands first, shake hands with the: I will shake hands with the Devil as soon. So so, said her Husband, you will shake hands with him then: Al

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you will not shake hands, He shake you : what young buswift :  
 Well husband, said she, it becomes a woman to obey her husband,  
 in regard whereof I dzine to him. Thers well said, quoth the com-  
 pany : and so she toke her leabe and went down. And within a  
 while after they paid the shot and departed thence to Jarrats Hall,  
 where they went to their lodging ; and the next day they toke their  
 way homeward all together : and coming to Colebrooke, they toke  
 up their lodging : and it was Coles custome to deliher his money to  
 the good wife of the house to keep it till morning : which in the end  
 turned to his utter destruction, as hereafter shall be shewed.

How *Grays* wife of Gloucester, with one or two more of her Neigh-  
 bours went to the Fair, where *Servants* came to be hired, and how  
 she tooke the Earle of Shrewesburies Daughter into her Service,  
 Chap. III.

**I**T was wont to be an old custome in Gloucester-shire, that at a  
 certain time in the year, all such young men and maidens as were  
 out of service, resorted to a fair that was kept neer Gloucester, there  
 to be ready for any that would come to hire them, the young men  
 stood all on a row on the one side, and the maidens on the other. It  
 came to pass, that the Earle of Shrewes-buries Daughter, whose  
 Father was lately banished, being dziben into great distress, and  
 weary with trabel : as one whose delicate life was never used to  
 such toyle : fate her down upon the high-way side making this la-  
 mentation ; O false and deceitful world, quoth she ! who is in the  
 that wishes not to be rid of thee, for thy extremities are great :  
 Thou art deceitful to all and trusty to none : Fortune is thy trea-  
 surer, who is like thy self wavering and unconstant, she setteth up  
 Aprants, beateh down Kings : giveth shame to some, and renown  
 to others : Fortune giveth these evils, and we see it not ; with  
 her hands she toucheth us, and we feel it not : she treades us un-  
 der foot, and we know it not : she speaks in our eares and we hear  
 her not : she cries aloud, and we understand her not : And why ?  
 because we know her not, until misery doth make her manifest.

Oh my dear Father, well maist thou doe. Of all misfortunes it  
 is most unhappie to be fortunate : and by this misfortune came my  
 fall. Was ever good Lady brought to this extremity : what is be-  
 come of my rare jewels, my rich aray, my sumptuous fare, my wait-  
 ing servants, my many friends, and all my baine pleasures : my  
 pleasure is banisht by displeasure, my friends fled like foes, my ser-  
 vants gone, my feasting turned to fasting my rich aray consumed to

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ragged, and my jewels deck out my chiefest enemies: therefore of all things the meanest state is best, poverty with surety is better then honour mixed with fear: seeing God hath allotted me to this misery of life, I will frame my heart to embrace humility, and carry a mind answerable to my misfortunes, he on this same title of Ledship, how little doth it avails the distressed? So, no, I must therefore forget my Birth and Parentage, and think no more on my Fathers house, where I was wont to be served, now will I learne to serve, and plaine Meg shall be my name, good Lord grant I may get a good service, nay any service shall serve where I may have meat, drink, and apparel. She had no sooner spoken these words but she spied a couple of maidens more comming towards her: who were comming to the faire: and bidding her good morrow, asked her if she went to the faire. Pea morry quoth she, I am a poore mans childe that is out of service, and I hear that at the Statute, folkes do come of purpose to hire servants. True it is said the Spaldens, and thither go we for the same purpose, and would be glad of your company. With a good will, and I am right glad of yours, said she, beseeching you good Spaldens, you will do me the favour, to tell me what service were best for me: for the more to blame my parents, they would never put me forth to know any thing. Why what can you do (quoth the Spaldens) can you brew and bake, make butter and cheese and reape corne well? So verily said Margaret but I would be right glad to learne to do any thing wharforher it be. If you could spin or card, said another, you might do excellent well with a Clothier, for they are the best services that I know, there you shall be sure to live well, and so like herself.

Then Margaret wept, saying alas, what shall I do? I was never brought up to these things. What can you do nothing quoth they? So truly (quoth she) that is good for any thing, but I can read and write, and sow, some skill I have in my needle, and a little on my Lute: but this I see will profit me nothing. Good Lord quoth they, are you wench? we did never hear of a Spald before, that could read and write. And although you can do no other thing, yet possibly you may get a service, if you can behave your self manerly. I pray you quoth another saying, you are wench, will you do so much as to read a love-letter that is sent me? for I was at a friends of mine with it, and he was not at home, and so I know not what is in it, I pray you let me see it, quoth Margaret, and I will shew you, whereupon she read as followeth

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**O** Lenny my joy, I die for thy love,  
And now I hear say that thou dost remove,  
And therefore, Lenny, I pray thee recite,  
Where shall I meet thee soon at night.

For why, with my Master no more will I stay,  
But for thy love I will run away :  
O Lenny, Lenny, thou putt'st me to pain,  
That thou no longer wilt here remain.

I will wear out my shoes of Neats-leather,  
But thou and I will meet together ;  
And in spite of Fortune, Rat, or Mouse,  
We will dwell together in one house.

For who doth not esteem of thee,  
Shall have no service done of me :  
Therefore good Lenny have a care,  
To meet poor Fragments at the Fair.

Now alas good soul (quoth Lenny) I think he be the kindest young man, in the world. The rest answered, that he seemed no less, and surely it appeareth that he is a pretty witty fellow, I will give you a good thing, and let me have copy of it to send to my sweet-heart : that you shall wish all my heart ; and so coming to the faire, they took up their standing. Within a while after goodwife Gray of Gloucester came thither to shew her self of divers commodities : and when she had bought what she would, she told her neighbour she had great need of a maide-servant or twaine : therefore quoth she, good neighbour go with me and let me have your opinion. With a good will said her neighbour, and together they went, and looking and biesowing the maidens over, she took special notice of Margarete. Wellie she quoth she, there stands a very proper maiden, and one of a modest and comely countenance. Verily said her neighbour, so she is as ever I look'd upon.

The maiden seeing them to biesow her so well, was so abashed ; that a scarlet-colour over-spread her lilly cheeks, which the woman perceiving, came unto her, and asked if she were willing to serve. The maid with a low courtesie, and a most gentile speech answered, it was the only cause of her coming. Can you spin or card, said  
god.

## The Pleasant History

good-wife Gray? Truly Dame, said she, though my cunning therein be but small, my good will to learne is great, and I trust my diligence shall content you. What wages will you take, quoth good-wife Gray? I will reseyre that, said Margueret, to your conscience and courtesie, desiring no more then what I shall deserve. Then asking what Country woman she was, the maiden wept, saying: Ah good Dame, I was untimely boyn in Shropshire, of poor parents, and yet not so needy as unfortunate, but death having ended their sorowes, hath left me to the cruelty of these envious times, to finish my Parents Tragedy with my troubles: What? maiden quoth her dame, have you a care to do your business, and to live in Gods fear, and you shall have no care to regard fortunes frotnes and so they went home together.

Now, so soone as the good-man saw her, he asked his wife where she had that Maiden? She said at the Fair. Why? then quoth he, thou hast brought all the Fair away, and I doubt it were better for us to send the fair to another Town, then to keep the fair here. Why man, quoth she what mean you by that? Woman I mean this, that she will prove a loadestone, to draw the hearts of all my men after her, and so we shall have worse service done of all sides. Then said his wife, I hope Husband you think I will look better after our commodity then so, and so let her alone to look to such matters. Is thy name Margueret, quoth her Master? proper is the name to thy person, for thou art a pearl indeed, orient, and rich in beauty.

His wife hearing him say so, began to change her opinion: What husband (quoth she) is the wind of that dow? Begin you to like your maso to well? I doubt I had more need to look to your self: before God, I had rather then an Angel I had chosen some other, but hear you maid, you shall pack hence: I will not nourish a Snake in my bosome, and therefore get you gone, I will keep none of you, provide a service where you may.

The Maiden hearing her say so, fell down on her knees, and besought her, saying O sweet Dame, be not so cruel to me, to turn me out of doors, now: alas, I know not where to go, or what to do, if you forsake me: O let not the fading beauty of my face dispoyle me of your labour: for rather then that shall binder my service, this my knife shall some disfigure my face and I will banish beauty as my greatest enemy. And with that, her abundant tears stopped her speech, that she could not utter one word more.

The woman seeing this, could not forbear any longer nor could her Master say in the room for weeping. Well Margueret said her

Dame,

## Of Thomas of Reading.

Dame, (little knowing that a Lady smiled befoze her) using thy self well, I will keep thee and thou shalt have my good will, if thou govern thy self with wisdom : and so she sent her about her business. Her Husband comming to supper said, How now wife art thou so doubtful of me, that thou hast put away thy maiden? I wis (qd. she) you are a wise man, to stand praising of a maidens beauty befoze her face : and you a wise woman qd. he, to grow jealous without a cause. So to supper they went, and because Margaret shewed her self of fine behabour among the rest, she was appointed to waite on the Table. And it is to be understood, that Gray did never eat his meat alone, but still had some of his neighbours with him, befoze whom he called his maid, saying, Margaret, come hither. Now because there was another of the same name in the house, she made answer, I call not you maiden, quoth he but Margaret with the Lilly white hand : After which time she was ever called so.

How the Kings Majestie sent for the Clothiers, and of the sundry favours which he did them. Chap. 4.

**K**ing Henry prohibiting for his Voyage to France, against King Lewis and Robert Duke of Normandie his own Brother, committed the Government of the Realm in his absence, to the Bishop of Salisbury, a man of great wisdom and learning, whom the King esteemed highly, and afterwards he thought good for to send for the chief Clothiers of England, who according to the Kings appointment came the Court, and having licence to come befoze his Majestie he spake to this effect.

The strength of a King is the love and friendship of his people, and he governs over his Realm most surely, that ruleth justice with mercy, for he ought to fear many whom many do fear : therefore the Governours of the Common-wealth ought to observe two especial precepts : the one is that they so maintain the profit of the Commons, that whatsoever in their calling they do, they referre it thereunto : the other, that they be always as well careful over the whole Common-wealth as over any part thereof, lest while they uphold the one, the other be brought to utter decay.

And for as much as I do understand, and have partly seen that you the Clothiers of England, are no small benefit to the weal publique, I thought it good to know from your own mouths, if there be any thing not yet granted that may benefit you, or any other thing to be remedied that doth hurt you.



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The great desire I have to maintain you in your Trades hath moved me herewith. Therefore boldly say what you would have in the one thing or the other, and I will grant it you.

With that, they all fell down upon their knees and desired God to save his Majestie, and withal, requested three dayes respite to put in their answer: which was granted. And thereupon they departed. When the Clothiers had well considered of these matters, at length they thought meet to request of his Majestie for their first benefit, that all the Cloth measures through the Land might be of one length, whereas to their great disadvantage before every good town had a severall measure, the difficulty thereof was such that they could not keep them in memory, nor know how to keep their reckonings. The second thing whereof they found themselves grieved, was this that the people would not take crackt money, though it were never so good silver: whereupon it came to pass that the Clothiers and divers others, receiving great sums of money, it served them to no use, because it would not go current, but lay upon their hands without profit or benefit, whereof they prayed reformation. The third was a grief, whereof Hodgkins of Halifax complained, and that was: That whereas the Town of Halifax lived altogether upon Clothing, & by reason of false borderers, & other evil minded persons, they were oft robbed, and had their Clothes carried out of their fields, where they were dying: That it would please his Majestie to grant this Town this privilege. That whatsoever be taken stealing their cloth, might presently without any further trial be hanged up. When the day of their appearance approached, the Clothiers came before the King, and delibered up their Petition in writing, which his Majestie most graciously perusing, said he was ready to fulfill their request: and therefore for the first point of their Petition, he called for a staff to be brought him, and measuring thereupon the just length of his own arme, delivered it to the Clothiers: saying this measure shall be called a yard, and no other measure throughout all the Realm of England, shall be used for the same, and by this shall all men buy and sell, and we will so provide, that whosoever he be that abuseth our Subjects by any false measure, that he shall not only pay a fine for the same to the King: but also have his body punished by imprisonment. And as concerning the second point of your Petition, because of my sudden departure out of the Land, I know not better how to ease you of your grief (of crackt money) this Decree I make, because this account crackt money not current: I say, none shall be current but crackt money. And therefore, I will  
gibe



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gibe present charge that all the money thowto the Land shall be lit, and so you shall suffer no loss.

But now for your last request for the Town of Halifax: to bere by thesbe your clothes are often stolne from you, saking the Lawes already provided in that case, are not sufficient to keepe men in awe, it is indeede high time to have sharper punishment for them.

With that Hodgkins unmannerly interrupted the King, saying in broade Northern speech. Pea gude saith, may I ledy, the saul eule of may saul giff any thing will keepe them tobiat till the karls be hanged by the cragge. What the dule care they for bozing their eyne, sea lang as they may go groping up and down the Countrey like saule lizar lawnes begging and craching:

The King smiling to hear this rough beton fellow make this reply: Content thee Hodgkins, for we will have redress for all: albeit that hanging of men was never seen in England yet saking the corrupt world is groten more bold in all wickedness, I thinke it not amiss to ordain this death for such malefactozs: and peculiarly to the Town of Halifax: I gibe this priviledge that whosoever they find stealing their Cloth, being taken with the goods, that without further judgement they shall be hanged up.

Thus (said our King) I have granted what you request, and if hereafter, you find any other thing that may be good for you, it shall be granted; for no longer would I desire to lye among you, then I have care for the good of the Common-wealth: at which words ended, the King rose from his royal Throne, while the Clothiers on their knees prayed for both his health and happy success, and shewed themselves most thankful for his Highnesses favour. His Majestie bending his body towards them, said that at his home return, he would (by the grace of God) blisse them.

How the Clothiers had provided a sumptuous feast for the Kings Sons, Prince William and Prince Robert, at Gerrards Hall: shewing also what chance befel Cutlers of Kendal at that same instant, Chap. 5.

**T**he Clothiers departing from the Court in a merry mood, joyfull of their good success, each one to other praised and magnified the Kings great wisdom and vertue, commending also his affability and gentle disposition, so that Hodgkins affirmed on his faith, that he had rather speak to the Kings Majestie then to many Audices of peace. Indeede (said Cole) he is a most mild and mercifull Prince, and I pray God he may long reigne over us. Amen said the rest.

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Then said Cole, My Masters, shall we forget the great courtesie of the Kings Sons, those sweet and gentle Princes that still shewed us labour in our suite? in my opinion, it were reason so gratifie them in some sort, that we may not utterly be condemned of ingratitude: wherefore (if you think good) we will prepare a banquet for them at our Mask Garraie, who as you know, hath a fair house, and goodly rooms. Besides, the man himself is of a most courageous mind and good behabior, sufficient to entertain a Prince; his wife also is a dainty fine cook: all which considered, I know not a fitter place in London. 'Tis true, quoth Sutton, and if the rest be content, I am pleased it shall be so. At this they all answered, yea, for quoth they, it will not be passing forty shillings a peice, and that we shall recober in our crackt money.

Being thus agreed, the feast was prepared. Tm. Dove sd. they, we will commit the providing of musick to thee, and I, said Cole, will invite others of our Merchants and their wives to the same. What is well remembred said Gray. Upon this they called to their Mask and Maskers, shewing their determination, who most willingly said all things should be made ready, but I would have two dayes liberty, said the good wife, to prepare my house and other things. Content said the Clothiers, in the mean space we will bid our guests, and dispatch our other affaires. But Simon of Southampton charged his Hostess, that in any case she should not forget to make good store of portage. It shall be done quoth she.

It is to be remembred, that while this preparation was in hand, that Cuth. of Kendal had not forgot his kindness to his Maskers of Wolmes Inn. Therefore finding time convenient when her Husband was overseeing his bay makers, he greeted her in this sort: Sweet hostess, though I were the last time I was in town, oberhold with you, yet I hope it was not so offensible to you as you made shew for. Wold, my Cuthbert, quoth she, thou hast bowed thy self my Serbant: & so being, you are not to be blamed for doing what I wold you. By my bones, I could not chuse but smile to my self, so soon as I was out of their sight, to think how prettily you began to chabble. But now sd. he, we will change our chidings to kissing, and it beareth me that these cherry lipps should be subject to such a Lobcock as thy husband.

Subject to him quoth she: In faith sir no, I will have my lipps as as much liberty as my tongue, the one to say what I list, & the other to touch whom I like: In troth shall I tell thee, Cuth. the churlis beards smells so strong, that I care as much for kissing of him, as for looking on him: it is such a misshapen mizer, & such a bundle of beastlines,

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lines, that I can never think on him without spitting. He upon him, would my friends had carried me to my grave, when they went with me to the Church, to make him my husband. And so shedding a few dissembling tears, she stopt. What, my sweet mistress (quoth he) weep you? Nay sit down by my side, and I will sing thee one of my Country Jigges to make thee merry. Wilt thou in faith (quoth she?) Yes verily said Cutbert: and in troth quoth she, if you fall a singing, I will sing with you. That is well you can so suddenly change your note, quoth Cutbert then habs at it.

Man. **L**ong have I lov'd this bonny Liss,  
Yet durst not shew the same.

Wom. Therein you prove your self an Ass,

Man. I was the more to blame.

Yet still will I remain to thee,

Trang dilly do, trang dilly:

Thy friend and lover secretly

Wom. Thou art my own sweet bully.

Man. But when shall I enjoy the

delight of thy faire love?

Wom. Even when thou seest that fortune doth,  
all manner lets remove.

Man. O, I will fold thee in my arms,

Trang dilly do, trang dilly,

And keep thee so from sudden harms,

Wom. Thou art my own sweet bully,

Wom. My husband he is gone from home,

you know it very well.

Man. But when will he return again?

In truth I cannot tell.

If long he keep him out of sight,

Trang dilly do, trang dilly.

Be sure thou shalt have thy delight.

Man. Thou thou art a bonny lassie.

While they were singing this song, her husband being on a sudden come home, and secretly in a corner and heard all, and blessing himself with both his hands, said O abominable dissimulation, monstrous hypocriste, and are you in this humour? can you braggle together and sing together? Well quoth he, I will let them alone; to

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So a little more of their knavery. Neber did Cat watch mouse so narrowly, as I will watch them: And so going into the kitchen, he asked his wife if it were not dinner time. Even by and by husband (quoth she) the meat will be ready presently, after comes in Hodgkins and Martin, who straight asked for Cust. of Maudel Answer was made, that he was in his chamber. So when they had called him, they went to dinner: then they requested that their Dast and Dast's would sit with them.

Husband said she, you may go if you please, but as for me, I will desire pardon. Nay, good-wife, go up said her husband. What tooman, you must bear with your guests. Why husband, quoth she do you think that any can bear with the fits and frumps, which that Northern tike gave me the last time he was in Town: now God forgive me, I had as lief see the Devil as see him: thefore good husband go up your self, and let me alone, for in faith, I shall neber abide that jack while I live. Upon these words away went her husband, and though he said little, he thought the more. Now when he came up his guests had him welcome: I pray you sit down good mine Dast, quoth they, where is your wife: what, will she sit with us? So brily said he, the foolish woman hath taken sure a displeasure against Cutbert, that she swears she will not come in your company. Is it so, said the other: then trust me we are all well agreed: and I swear by my fathers tale, quoth he that were it not my good will to you, then love to her, I would neber come to your House more. I believe it well, said old Bolome. And so with other communication they doted out the time, till dinner was ended.

After they were risen, Martin and Hodgkins got them forth about their affairs, but Cutbert took his Dast by the hand saying my Dast I'll go talke with your wife; for my part I had thought we had been friends: but seeing her stomach is so big, and her heart so great, I will see what she will say to me; and with that he stept into the kitchen, saying, God speed you Dast is. It must be when you are away then, said she. What is your reason said the other? Because God neber comes where knives are present. Olp goodly draggell tale, quoth he, had I such a wife, I would present her tallow face to the Devil for a candle. With that he bent her browes, and like a Fury of Hell began to scite at him, saying, What you gag with jack, you blinching companion, get thee out of my kitchen quickly, or with my powdered fist I will make your pate as bald as a fryers.

Set me gone quoth he: thou shalt not bid me thine: out you dirty beld, you will make your husbands pate grow the more bald.

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I doubt: and with that he got him into the hall, and sat him down on the bench by his Wast, to whom he: 'Tis pittie my Wast, that your aged years that lobes quietnes, should be troubled with such a scolding quean. I, God help me, God help me, quoth the old man and so went towards the stable: which his wife watching, suddenly slept out and gave Curbert a kisse.

Within an hour after, the old man craftily called for his Bag to ride to the field: but as soone as he was gone, Curbert and his Daskers were such good friends, that they got into one of the ware-houses, and lockt the dooz to them: but her husband having set a spie for the purpose, suddenly turned back, and called for a capcase which lay in the ware-house. The serbant could not find the key by any means. Whereupon he called to have the lock broke open. Which they within hearing opened the dooz of their own accord. So soone as her husband espied her in that place, with admiration he said: O passion of my heart, what do you here? what you thou that cannot abide one another? what make you so close together? Is your chlding and rapling, bzabling, and bzauling, come to this? O what dissemblers are these! Why my Wast, quoth Curbert, what need you take the matter so hot? I gave a chaste to my Country-man Hodgkins, to lay up, and belibero it to your wife to be kept: and then is it not reason, that she should come and sek me my chaste? O quoth the old man, belike the dooz was lockt because the chaste should not run away. The dooz said his wife, unknown to us clapt to it self, and having a spring lock, was presently fast. Well but wife quoth he, I will giue you as much credit as a Crocodile, but as for your companion, I will teach him to come hither to look Chases.

And with that he caused his men to take him presently, and to bind him hand and foot. Which being done, they dzaw him up in a basket into the smoky loue of the hall, and there they did let him hang all that night, eben till the next day dinner time: when he should have ben at the banquet with the Princes: for neither Hodgkins nor Martin could intreat their inflamed Wast to let him down.

And in such a heat was he dzibert with dzawing him up, that he was faine to cast of his gownes, his coates and two paire of his stockings, to coole himself, making a bobo he should hang there seven years, except the Kings Sons came in person to beg his pardon which most of all grieved Curbert. When Cole and the rest of the western Peomen heard hereof, they could not chuse but laugh to think that he was taken rardy.

The yong Princes having giben promise to be with the Clorbi-

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ers kept their houre : but when all the rest went to giue them entertainment, Simon was so buſie in ſupping his portage that he could not ſpare ſo much time. Which when the Princes ſaw, with a ſmilſing countenance they ſaid, Sup Simon ther's good dzoth : or elſe he ſhew our Maſſes, quoth he, neuer looking behind him to ſee who ſpake, till the Prince clapt him on the ſhoulder. But good Lord how blanch he was when he ſpied them, knowing not how to excuse the matter.

Well, the Princes habing ended their Banquet, Jarrat comes, and with one of his hands took the Table of ſixteen ſot long quite from the ground ober their heads, from beſore the Princes, and ſet it on the other ſide of the Hall, to the great admiration of all them that beheld it.

The Princes being then ready to depart, the Clothiers moved them in pleaſant manner, to be good to one of their company, that did neither ſit, lye nor ſtand. Then he muſt needs hang, quoth the Princes. And ſo he doth, moſt excellent Princes, quoth they ; and therewithal told them the whole matter. When they heard the ſtory down to Boſomes Anne they go, where looking up in the roof, ſpied poor Cutbert pinned up in a baſket, and almoſt ſmoaked to death, who althoug he were greatly aſhamed, yet moſt pittifully begged that he might be releaſed.

What is his treſpaſs ſaid the Prince : Nothing if it ſhall like your grace, quoth he, but for looking for a cheſe : But he could not find it without my wiſe, ſaid the good man : the villain had lately dined with mutton, and could not digeſt his meat without cheſe, for which cauſe I have made him ſaſt theſe twenty houres, to the end he may have a better ſtomach to eat his dinner, then to uſe dallyance.

Let me entreat you, quoth the Prince, to releaſe him : and if eber hereafter you catch him in the corn, clap him in the pound. Your Grace ſhall request or demand any thing at my hand, ſaid the old man and ſo Cutbert was let down unhound, but when he was looſe, he vowed neuer to come within that houſe more. And it is ſaid, the old man Boſome ordained, that in remembrance of this deed, ebery year once, all ſuch as came thither to aſk for cheſes, ſhould be ſo ſerbed : which thing is to this day kept.



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How *Simons* wife of Southampton, being wholly bent to pride and pleasure, requested her Husband to see London, which being granted, how she got good wife *Sutton* of Salisbury to go with her, who took *Crab* to go along with them, and how he prophesied of many things. Chap. 6.

**T**he Clothiers being all come from London, *Suttons* wife of Southampton, who was with her Husband very merry and pleasant, brake her mind unto him in this sort :

Good Lord, Husband, will you neber be so kind as let me go to London with you ? shall I be pend up in Southampton like a parrot in a cage, or a Capon in a coop ? I would request no more of you in lieu of my pain, care and care, but to have one weeks time to see that fair City ; what is this life, if it be not mixt with some delight, and what delight is more pleasing then to see the fashions and manners of unknown places ? Therefore good Husband, if thou lovest me, deny not this simple request. You know I am no common gadder, nor have oft troubled you with trabel. God knows, this may be the last thing that ever I shall request at your hands.

Woman, quoth he, I would willingly satisfie your desire, but you know it is not contentent for both of us to be abroad, our charge is so great, and therefore our care ought not to be small. If you will go your self, one of my Men shall go with you and money enough you shall have in your purse : but to go with you my self, you see my business will not permit me.

Husband, said she, I accept your gentle offer. and it may be I shall entreat my gossip *Sutton* to go along with me. I shall be glad quoth her Husband, prepare your self when you will.

When she had obtained this licence she sent her man *Wassell* to Salisbury to know of good wife *Sutton* if she would keep her company to London. *Suttons* wife being as willing to go, as she was to request, neber rested till she had gotten leave of her Husband, the which when she had obtained, caking in her mind their pleasure would be small, being but the twain ; thereupon the wily woman sent *Jeeters* by collick *Crack* her man, both to *Grays* wife and *Fitzwillans* wife, that they would meet them at Reading, who liking well of the match, consented, and did so provide that they met according to promise at Reading, and from thence with *Col*s wife they went altogether, with each of them a man to London, each one taking up their lodging with a feberal friend.

When the merchants of London understood they were in London, they inhibited them every day home to their owne houses, where they



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had delicate good chér: and when they went abroad to sé the commodities of the City, the Merchants wives eber boze them company, being attired most dainty and fine: which when the Clothiers wives did sé, it grieved their hearts they had not the like.

Now, when they were brought into Cheap-side, there with great wonder they beheld the Shops of the Goldsmiths; & on the other side, the wealthy Mercers, whose Shops shined with all sorts of coloured silkes: in Marling Street they viewed the great number of Drapers: in St. Martins, Shoemakers: at St. Nicholas Church, the Hest-Hambles: at the end of the old Change the Fish-mongers: in Candle-wick-street, the Weavers: then we came into the Jewry-street, where all the Jewes did inhabit: then they came to Blackwell-Hall; where the Country Clothiers did use to méet.

Afterwards they proceeded, and came to St. Pauls Church, whose Steple was so high, that it séemed to pierce the Clouds, on the top whereof, was a great and mighty Weather-cock, of cleane silver, the which notwithstanding séemed as small as a sparrow to mens eyes, it stood so exceeding high, the which goodly weather-cock afterwards was stolne away, by a cunning Cripple, who found meanes enough to climbe up to the top of the Steple, and tooke it down: with the which, and a great some of money which he had got together by begging in his life-time, he builded a Gate on the North-side of the City, which to this day is called Cripple-gate.

From thence they went to the Tower of London, which was builded by Julius Cæsar, who was Emperour of Rome, And there they beheld salt and wine; which had lain there eber since the Romans inhabited this Land, which was many years before our Saviour Christ was born, the Wine was growen so thick, that it might have been cut like a Jelly. And in that place also they saw the money that was made of leather, which in ancient time went current amongst the people.

When they had to their great contentation beheld all this, they repaired to their lodgings, having also a sumptuous Supper ordained for them, with all delight that might be. And you shall understand, that when the Country Weavers, which came up with their Wives, saw the Weavers of Candle-wick Street, they had great desire presently to have some conference with them: and thus one began to challenge the other for woollman-ship: quoth Weasel, He toozh with any of you all for a Croton, take me if you dare, and he that makes his yard of cloth sooner, shall have it. You shall be brought to this, said the other, and if it were for ten crownes: but

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we will make this bargain, that each of us shall winde their own quills. Content quoth Weasel: and so to work they went, but Weasel lost. Whereupon another of them took the matter in hand, who lost likewise: so that the London Weavers triumphed against the Country Weavers, casting forth divers frumps.

Alas poor fellows, quoth they your hearts are good, but your hands, are ill. Tush the fault was in their legges, quoth another; pray you friend, were you not born at home: why do you ask, quoth Weasel? Because, said he, the biggest place of your legges is next to your shoe.

Crabbe hearing this being Cholerick of nature, chafed like a man of Law at the Barr, and he wages with them four crowns to twain: the others agreed, to work they go: but Crab conquers them all. Whereupon the London Weavers were nipt in the head like birds, and had not a word to say.

Now, saith Crab as we have lost nothing, so you have won nothing, and because I know you cannot be right Weavers except you be good fellows, therefore if you will go with us, we will bestow the Ale upon you. That is spoken like a good fellow, and like a Weaver quoth the other. So along they went as it were to the sign of the Red Cross.

When they were set down, & had drunk well, they began merrily to prattle & to extoll Crab to the skies. Whereupon Crab protested, that he would come & dwell among them: May that must not be, said a London Weaver: the King hath given us privilege, that none should lye among us, but such as thereto taken years in London, with that Crab according to his old manner of prophesying, said thus:

**T**He day is very neer at hand,  
When as the King of this fair Land,  
Shall privilege you more then so:  
Then Weavers shall in skarle go,  
And to one brother-hood be brought,  
The first that is in London wrought,  
When other Trades-men by your same  
Shall cover all to do the same.  
Then shall you all live wandrous well,  
But this one thing I shall you tell,  
The day will come before the doome,  
In Candle-week-street shall stand no loome,  
Nor any Weaver dwelling there,  
But men that shall more need it beare.

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For Clothing shall be sore decayd,  
And men undone that use that trade,  
And yet the day some men shall see,  
This trade again shall raised be.  
When as Bayliffe of Sarum town,  
Shall buy and purchase Bishops down,  
Where there never man did sow,  
Great store of goodly corn shall grow:  
And Wood, that makes all colours found,  
Shall spring upon that barren ground.  
At that same day I tell you plain,  
Who so alive doth then remain,  
A proper Maiden they shall see,  
Within the town of Salisburie,  
Of favor sweet and nature kind,  
With goodly eyes, and yet stark blind,  
This poor blind Maiden I do say,  
In age shall go in rich array.  
And he that takes her to his wife,  
Shall lead a joyful happy life,  
The wealthiest Clothier shall he be,  
That ever was in that Country.  
But Clothing kept as it hath been,  
In London never shall be seen,  
For Weavers then the most shall win,  
That work for clothing next the skin.  
Till pride the Common-wealth doth peece,  
And causeth huswives to leave their wheele,  
Then poverty upon each side,  
Unto those work-men shall betide.  
At that time: from Eagles nest,  
That proudly builded in the West,  
A sort shall come with cunning hand,  
To bring strange weaving in this Land,  
And by their gaines that great will fall,  
They shall maintain the Weavers Hall:  
But long they shall not flourish so,  
But folly will them overthrow.  
And men shall count it mickle shame,  
To bear that kind of Weavers name,  
And this as sure shall come to pass,  
As here is Ale within this glass.

## of Thomas of Reading.

When the silly soules that sat about him heard him speak in this sort, they admired, and honoured Crabbe for the same. What my Masters, said Weasel, do you wonder at these wordes? he will tell you twenty of these tales, for which cause we call him our c. n. b. a. Prophet: his attire fits his title, said they, and we never heard the like in our liues: and if this should be true, it would be strange. Doubt not but it will be true, quoth Weasel; for He tell you to day, he did but once see our Nick his Nel, and presently he p. o. r. e. d. out this rime:

That kisse, O Nel, God give thee joy,  
Will nine months hence breed thee a boy.

And He tell you what you shall hear: we kept reckoning, and it fell out as just as Joanes buttocks on a close-stole, for which cause our Maides durst never kisse a man in his sight: upon this they broke company, and went every one about his business, the London Weathers to their frames and the Country fellows to their daines, who after their great banquetting and merriment, went every one home to their own houses, though with less money then they brought out yet with more pride.

Especially Simons wife of Southampton, who told the rest of her Gossips, that she saw no reason, but that their husbands should maintain them, as well as the Merchants did their wives: for I tell you what, quoth she, we are as proper women (in my conceit) as the proudest of them all; as handsome of body, as fair of face, our legges as well made, and our set as fine; then what reason is there (seeing our husbands are of as good wealth) but we should be as well maintained?

You say true Gossip, said Sattors wife: trust me, it made me blush, to see them bragge it out so gallantly, and wee to go so homely: but before God, said the other, I will haue my husband to buy me a London Gown, or in faith he shall haue little quier, so shall mine said another: and mine too, quoth the third: and all of them sing the same note: so that when they came home, their husbands had no little to do: Especially Simon, whose wife daily lay at him for London apparel to whom he said, Good woman be content, let us go according to our place and ability: what will the Bailiffes think, if I should pranke thee up like a Peacock, and then in thy attire surpass their wives: they would either think I was mad, or else that I had more money then I could well use: for I say the good wife,

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Wife, that such as are in their youth Masters, do prove in their age Garhe beggers.

Beside that, it is enough to raise me up in the Kings-book, for many times mens coffers are judged by their garments: why, we are Country-folkes, and must keep our selves in good compass: Gray russet, and good hemp spun cloth doth best become us; I tell thee wife, it were as undecent for us to go like Londoners as it is for Londoners, to go like Courtiers.

What a coyle keep you, quoth she: are not we Gods creatures as well as Londoners: and the Kings subjects, as well as they? then finding our wealth to be as good as theirs, why should we not go as gay as Londoners? No, husband, no, here is the fault, we are kept without it, only because our husbands be not so kind as Londoners: why man, a Cobler there keeps his wife better then the best Cordier in this Countrey: nay, I will affirme it, that the London Wyper-wives, and the very Kitchen-wifes cryers do exceed us in their Sundayes attire: nay, more then that, I did see the Winesheerers wife, which belongs to one of our Merchants, come in with a Lander of Water on her shoulder, and yet half a dozen Gold rings on her fingers. You may then think, wife (quoth he) he got them not with idleness.

But wife, you must consider what London is, the chief and capital City of all the Land, a place on the which all strangers cast their eyes, it is (wife) the Kings chamber and his Majesties Royal seat: to that City repaires all Nations under Heaben. Therefore it is most meet and convenient, that the Citizens of such a City should not go in their apparel like Peasants, but for the credit of our Countrey, weare such stately habits, as do carry gravity and comeliness in the eyes of all beholders. But if we of the Countrey went so (quoth she) were it not as great credit for the Land as the other? Woman, quoth her husband, it is altogether needless, and in divers respects it may not be. Why then I pray you, quoth she, let us go dwell at London. A word some spoken, said her husband, but not so easie to be performed: therefore wife, I pray thee hold thy prating, for thy talke is foolish: yea husband your old churlish conditions will never be left, you keep me here like a drudge and a drail, and so you may keep your money in your purse, you care not for your credit, but before I will go so like a Winesheers wife. I will first go naked: and I tell you plain, I scorne it greatly, that you should clap a gray Cowen on my back, as if I had not brought you this penice: before I was married, you swore I should have any thing

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thing that I requested, but now all is forgotten. And in saying this, she went in, and some after she was so sick that needs she must go to bed: and when she was laid, she drabe out that night with many grievous groanes, sighing and sobbing, and no rest she could take, God wot. And in the morning when she should rise, the good seyl fell down in a swoon, which put her spaidens in a great fright, who running down to their father, cryed out: Alas, alas our Dame is dead, our Dame is dead. The good-man hearing this, ran up in all haste, and there fell to rubbing and chaffing of her temples sending for aquaviva, and saying, Ah my sweet-heart, speak to me good-wife, alack, alack, call in the Neighbours, you quene, quoth he. With that she lift up her head, fetching a great groane, and presently swooned again, and much ado I toke he had to keep life in her: but when she was come to her self, How dost thou wife, quoth he: What toile thou have? for Gods sake tell me if thou hast a mind to any thing, thou shalt have it. Away dissembler (quoth she) how can I helieve this? thou hast said to me as much a hundred times, and deceived me, it is thy churlishness that hath killed my heart, never was woman matched to so unkind a man.

Now, good wife, blame me not without cause; God knoweth how heartily I love thee, Love me: No, thou dost never carry my love but on the tip of thy tongue, quoth she, I dare sweare thou desirest nothing so much as my death and for my part I would to God thou hadst thy desire: but be content, I shall not trouble thee long: and with that fetching a sigh, she swooned and gave a great groan, The man seeing her in this case, was wondrous woe: but so soon as they had recovered her, he said, O my dear wife, if any had conceit hath engendred this sickness, let me know it; or if thou knowest any thing that may procure thy health, let me understand thereof, and I protest thou shalt have it, if it cost me all that ever I have.

O husband, quoth she, how may I credit your words, when for a paltry sute of apparel you denyed me? Well wife, quoth he, thou shalt have apparel or any thing else thou wilt request, if God send thee once health. O husband, if I may find you so kind, I shall think my self the happiest woman in the world, thy words have greatly comforted my heart, methinketh if I had it, I could drinke a good draught of Rhenish-wine.

Well, wine was sent for: O Lord said he, that I had a pece of a chicken, I feel my stomach desirous of some meat. O ad am I of that, said her husband, and so the woman within a few dayes after was very well.

But



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But you shall understand, that her husband was faine to dzels her London like, ere he could get her quiet, neither would it please her, except the stuffe was bought in Cheapside: for out of Cheapside nothing would content her, were it never so good: insomuch that if she thought a Tayloz of Cheapside made not her Colow, she would sweare it were quite spoiled.

And habing thus wonne her husband to her will, when the rest of the Clothiers wives heard hereof, they would be suted in the like sort too: so that ever since, the Wives of Southampton, Salisbury, of Gloucester, Worcester, and Reading, went all as gallant and as brave as any Londoners wives.

How the Clothiers sent the King aide into France, and how he overcame his Brother Robert, and brought him into England, and how the Clothiers sealed his Majesty and his Son at Reading. Chap. VII.

**T**he Kings Majesty being at the wars in France, against Lewis the French King and Duke Robert of Normandy sending for others supplies of souldiers out of England, the Clothiers at their own proper cost set out a great number, and sent them over to the King.

Which Roger Bishop of Salisbury, who governed the Realm in the Kings absence did certifie the King of with his letters written in their commendations.

And afterward it came to pass that God sent his Highness victorie over his Enemies and having taken his Brother prisoner, brought him most joyfully with him into England and appointed him to be kept in Cardiss Castle prisoner, yet with this favour, that he might hunt and bathe where he would up and down the Country, and in this sort he lived a good while of whom we will speak more at large hereafter.

The King being thus come home; after his Winters rest he made his Summers progress into the West-country, to take a view of all the chief Towns: whereof the Clothiers being advertised they made great preparation against his coming, because he had promised to visit them all.

And when his Grace came to Reading, he was entertained and received with great joy and triumph: Thomas Cole being the chief man of regard in all the Town, the King honored his house with his Princely presence; where during the Kings abode, he, and his Son, and Nobles were highly feasted.

There the King beheld the great number of people that was by that



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that one man maintained in woꝝk, whose hearty affection and love toward his Majestie old well appear as well by their outward countenance, as their gifts presented unto him. But of Cole himself the King was so well perswaded, that he committed much trust in him, and put him in great authoritie in the Town. Furthermoze the King said, That for the love which those people bore him living, that he would lay his bones among them when he was dead. For I knowe not said he, where they may be better bestowed, till the blessed day of resurrection, then among these my friends which are like to be happy partakers of the same.

Whereupon his Majestie caused there to be builded a most goodly and famous Abbey: in which he might shew his devotion to God, by increasing his service, and leave example to other his successors to do the like. Likewise within the Town he after builded a fair and goodly Castle, in the which he often kept his Court, which was a place of his chief residence during his life, saying to the Clothiers, that seeing he found them such faithful subjects, he would be their neighbour, and dwell among them.

After his Majesties royal feasting at Reading, he proceeded in progress, till he had visited the whole West countrie, being wondrously delighted, to see those people so diligent to apply their business: and coming to Salisbury, the Bishop received his Majestie with great joy and with triumph attended on his Grace to his Palace, where his Highness lodged.

There Sutton the Clothier presented his Highness with a broad cloth, of so fine a thred, & exceeding good woꝝkmanship, & therewithal of so fair a colour as his Grace gave commendation thereof, and as it is said, he held it in such high estimation that thereof he made his Parliament robes, & the first Parliament that ever was in England, was graced with the Kings person in those robes, in requital whereof his Highness afterward paid Sutton many princely labours.

And it is to be remembꝛed, that Simon of Southampton (seeing the King had overpast the place where he dwelt) came with his wife and servants to Salisbury, & against the Kings going forth of that Citie, he caused a most pleasant arbour to be made upon the top of the hill leading to Salisbury, beset all with red & white Roses in such sort, that not any part of the timber could be seen, within the which sat a maiden attired like a Queen attended on by a fair train of maidens, who at the Kings approach presented him with a Garland of sweet flowers, paying him such honour as the Ladies of Rome were wont to do to their Princes after their victories: which the King took

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his gracious part, and for his farewel from that Country, they bore him company ower part of the plain, with the sound of others sweet instruments of musick. All which when his Grace understood 'twas done at the cost of a Clothier, he said he was the most honoured by those men above all the mean subjects, in his Land: & to his Highness past on ro Exeter, having given great rewards to these maidens.

Tom Dove and the residue of the Clothiers, against his Graces coming thither, had ordained others sumptuous Jewes; First, there was one that presented the person of Augustus Caesar the Emperour, who commanded after the Romans invasion, that their City should be called Augusta, after his own name, which before time was called Ilica, and of later years Exeter.

Here his Majesty was royally feasted seven dayes together, at the only cost of Clothiers, but the others delights & sundry pastimes which they made before the King, and his Nobles is too long here to be rehearsed, and therefore I will ower pass them to avoid tediousness.

His grace then coasting along the Country, at last came to Gloucester, an ancient City, which was builded by Glove, a British King, who named it after his own name, Gloucester. Here was his Majesty entertained by Gray the Clothier, who profest himself to be of that ancient family of Grays, whose first original issued out of that ancient and honourable Castle and Town of Kithyn.

Here was the King most bountifullly feasted, having in his company his Brother Robert (although his prisoner the same time.) And his Grace being desirous to see the Maidens card and spinne they were a purpose set to their work: among whom was fair Margarett with her white hands, whose excellent beauty having pierc't the eyes of the amorous, it made such an impression in his heart, that afterward he could never forget her: & so vehemently was his affection kindled, that he could take no rest, till by writing he had bewayed his mind: but of this too will speak moze in another place: and the King at his departure said, that to gratifie them, he would make his Son Robert their Earle, who was the first Earle that ever was in Gloucester.

Now when his grace was come from thence, he went to Worcester, where William Fitzallen made preparation in all honourable sort to receive him which man being bozn of great parentage, was not to learn how to entertain his Majesty being descended of that famous Family, whose patrimony lay about the Town of Worcester, which Town his predecessors had inclosed with stately walls of stone.

Although adverse fortune had so grievously frownded on some of them, that their children were faine to become tradesmen, whose hands

were

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were to them instead of lands, notwithstanding God raised again the same of this man both by his great wealth, and also in his posterity, whose eldest Son Henry the Kings, God son, became afterward the Mayor of London, who was the first Mayor that ever was in that City, who governed the same 23. years: and then his Son Roger Fitz-allen was the second Mayor.

The princely pleasures that in Worcester were shewn the King, were many & marvellous, and in no place had his Majesty received more delight then here: for the which at his departure he did shew himself very thankful. Now when his Grace had thus taken view of all his good towns westward, and in that progress had visited these Clothiers he returned to London, with great joy of his Commons.

How *Hodgkins* of Halifax came to the Court, & complained to the King, that his priviledge: was nothing worth, because when they found any offender, they could not get a hangman to execute him: & how by a Fryer a gin was devised to chop off mens heads of it self. Chap. 8.

**A**fter that *Hodgkins* had got the priviledge for the town of Halifax, to hang up such thieves as stole their cloth in the night, presently without any further judgment all the Clothiers of the town were exceeding glad and perswaded themselves, that now their goods would be safe all night, without watching them at all, so that whereas before the town maintained certain watchmen to keep their cloth by night, they were hereupon dismissed as a thing needless to be done, supposing with themselves, that seeing they should be straight hanged that were found faulty in this point, that no man would be so desperate to enterprize any such act. And indeed the matter being nosed through the whole Country, that they were straight to be hanged that use such thebery, it made many lewd liberals to refrain such thebery.

Nevertheless there was at the same time living, a notable thief named *Wallis*, whom in the North they called mighty *Wallis*, in regard of his valour and manhood: This man being most subtil in such a kind of knavery, having heard of this late priviledge, and therewithal of the Towns security, said that once he would venture his neck for a pack of Northern cloth: and therefore comming to one or two of his companions he asked if they would be partners in his adventure, and if (quoth he) you will herein hazard your bodies, you shall be sharers in all our booties.

At length by many perswasions the men consented: whereupon late in the night, they got them all to a Farlours shop, and called up

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the Faulkes in the house. What the foul ill wold you have (qd. they) at this time of the night? Wallis answered saying, Good-fellows, we would have you to remobe the shoes of our hoxses feet, and set them on again, and for your pains you shall be well pleased. The Smith at length was perswaded, and when he had plucht off all the shoes from their hoxses feet, they would needs have them all set backward. How say you man? quoth the Smith, are you like fules? what the del do you mean to break your crags? gud saith I tro the men be woud. Not so Smith, qd. they, do thou as we bid thee and thou shalt have thy money: for it is an old proberbe,

Be it better, or be it worse,

Please you the man that beares theurse.

Gud saith and see I saith, qd. the Smith, and so did as he was willed. When Wallis had thus caused their hoxses to be shod, to Wallisfar they went, where they without any let laded their hoxses with cloth and departed a contrary way.

In the mozning, so soon as the Clothiers came to the field, they found that they were rob'd, whereupon one ranne to another to tell these things. Now when Hodgkins heard thereof, rising up in haste he wold his neighbours to mark and see if they could not descry either the foot-steppe of men or hoxses. Which being done, they perceived that hoxses had been there, and saking to pursue them by their foot-stepts, they went a clean contrary way, by reason that their hoxses were shod backward: and when in baine they had long pursued them, they returned, being neber the neerer. Now Wallis used this feat so long, that at length he was taken, and two moze with him: whereupon according to the priviledge of the Town, they put Walters about the Cheebes necks presently to hang them up.

When they were come to the place appointed, Wallis and the rest being out of hope to escape death, prepared themselves to suffer patiently the rigoz of the Law. And therewith the rest laying open the lewtness of their life, grievously lamenting for his sinnes: at length commending their soul, to God, they peeled their bodies to the grabe, at which sight the people were greatly moved with pity, because they had neber sen men to hanging befoze: but when they should have been tyed up, Hodgkins willed one of his neighbours to play a Hangmans part, who would not by any means do it, although he was a very poe man, who for his pains should have been possed of all their apparel. When he would not yeld to the office one of them which had his cloth stolne, was commanded to do the deed; but he in like manner would not, saying, When I have the skill to make a  
man,

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man, I will hang a man, if it chance my workmanship do not like me.

And thus from one to another, the office of the Hang-man was passed off. At last a Kogue came by, whom they would have compelled to have done that deed. Say, my Masters, quoth he, not so: but as you have got a priviledge for the Town, so you were best to procure a commission to make a hang-man, or else you are like to be without for me. Neighbour Hodgkins quoth one, I pray you do this office your self, you have had most loss, and therefore you should be the most ready to hang them your self. No, not I (quoth Hodgkins) though my loss were ten times greater then it is, notwithstanding look which of these Thiebes will take upon him to hang the other, shall have his life saved otherwise they shall all to prison till I can provide a hang-man.

When Wallis saw the matter brought to this pass he began stoutly to reply, saying, my Masters of the Town of Wallisfar, though your priviledge stretch to hangmen up presently that are found stealing of your goods, yet it gives you no warrant to imprison them till you provide them a hang-man: my self with these my fellows, have here yielded our selves to satisfie the Law, and if it be not performed, the fault is yours, and not ours, and therefore we humbly take our leave: from the Gallows the xliiij. of August. And with that he leapt from the ladder, and hurl'd the halter at Hodgkins face.

When the Clothiers saw this, they knew not what to say, but taking them by the sleeves, entreated to have their own again: Not so, quoth Wallis, you get not the value of a pache or a halby: we have sold you your cloth, then why do you not hang us: here we have made our selves ready, and if you will not hang us, chuse. A plague upon you, quoth he, you have bindzed me God knows what, I made account to dine this day in Heaven and you keep me here on earth where there is not a quarter of that good cheer. The foule evil take you all, I was fully provided to give the Gallows a box on the ear, and now God knows when I shall be in so good a mind again: and so he with the rest of his companions departed.

When Hodgkins saw that notwithstanding their Thiebery, both they flouted at their sentry, he was much moved in mind: and as he stood in his dumps chetoying his cud making his dinner with a dish of melancholy, a gray Friar reverently saluted him in this sort: All hail, good-man Hodgkins, happiness and health be ever with you, and to all suppressors of lewd libers, God send everlasting joyes.

I am sorry good-man Hodgkins, that the great priviledge which our King gave to this Town, comes to no greater purpose: far better had it been that it had never been granted, then so lightly regarded:

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the Town had suffered through their own peevishness, an everlasting reproach this day, only because foolish pity hath blinded Justice. Consider, that compassion is not to be had upon Thieves and Robbers: pity only appertaineth to the virtuous sort, who are overtaken with the snares of misery and mischance. What great cause of boldness have you given to bad liars, by letting these fellows thus to escape, and how shall you now keep your goods in safety, seeing you fulfill not the Law which should be your defence? never think that Thieves will make any conscience to carry away your goods, when they find themselves in no danger of death, who have more cause to praise your pity, then commend your wisdom; wherefore in time seek to prevent the ensuing evil.

For my own part, I have that care of your good, that I would work all good means for your benefit, and yet not so much in respect of your profit, as for the desire I have to uphold Justice, and seeing I find you and the rest so womanish, that you could not find in your hearts to hang a thief, I have devised how to make a gin that shall cut off their heads without mans help, and if the King will allow thereof. When Hodgkins heard this, he was somewhat comforted in mind, and said to the Fryer, that if by his cunning he could performe it, he would once again make sure to the King to have his grant for the same. The Fryer willed him to have no doubt in him: and so when he had devised it, he got a Carpenter to frame it out of hand.

Hodgkins in the mean time posted up to the Court, and told his Majesty that the privilege of Hallifax was not worth a pudding. Why so, said the King? Because, quoth Hodgkins, we can get never a hang-man to trust our thieves: but if it shall like your good Grace, (quoth he) there is a feat Fryer, that will make us a device, which shall without the hand of man cut off the craggies of all such carles, if your Majesty will please to allow thereof.

The King understanding the full effect of the matter, at length granted his petition: whereupon till this day, it is observed in Hallifax, that such as are taken stealing of their cloth, have their heads chopt off with the same gin.

How the Bailiffs of London could get no man to be their Catchpole, and how certain Flemings took that office upon them, whereof many of them were fled into this Realm, by reason of certain waters that had drowned a great part of their Country. Chap. 9.

**T**he City of London being at that time governed by Bailiffes, it came to pass, that in a certain fray two of their Catchpoles were



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were killed, for at that time they had not the name of Serghants: and you shall understand, that their office was so much hated and detested of Englishmen, that none of them would take it upon them, so that the Bailiffes were glad to get any man whatsoever, and to give him certain wages to performe that office.

It came to passe, as I said before, that two of their Officers by arresting of a man, were at one instant slaine, by means whereof the Bailiffes were enforced to seek others to put in their rooms, but by no means they could get any, wherefore according to their wonted manner, they made proclamation, that if there were any man that would present himself before them, they should not only be settled in that office during their lives, but also should have such maintenance and allowance, as for such men was by the City provided: and notwithstanding that it was an office most necessary in the Common wealthe yet did the poorest wretch despise it, that lived in any estimation among his neighbours.

At last, a couple of Flemings, which were fled into this Land, by reason that their Countrey was drowned with the Sea, hearing the Proclamation, offered themselves unto the Bailiffes to serve in this place, who were presently received and accepted, and according to order had garments given them which were of two colozs, blue and red, their coats, breeches and stockings, whereby they were known and discerned from other men.

Within half a year after, it came to passe, that Thomas Dove of Exeter came up to London, who having by his folly and good fellowship, brought himself greatly behind hand, was in danger to others men of the City, among the rest, one of his Creditors sent an officer to arrest him. The Dutch-man that had not been long experienced in such matters, and hearing how many of his fellows had been killed for attempting to arrest men, stood quivering and quaking in a corner of the street to watch for Thomas Dove, and having long waited, at length he espied him: whereupon he prepared his mace ready, and with a pale countenance proceeded to his office; at what time coming behind the man, suddenly with his mace he knocked him on the pate, saying, I arrest you giving him such a blow that he fell him to the ground.

The Catchpole thinking he had killed the man, left his mace behind him, and ranne away: the Creditor he ran after him, calling and crying that he should turne again: But the Fleming would not by any means turne backe, but got him quite out of the City, and took Sanctuary at Westminster.

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Dove being come to himself, arose and went to his Anne, no man binding his passage, being not a little glad he so escaped the danger: Yet notwithstanding, at his next coming to London, another Catchpole met with him, and arrests him in the Kings name.

Dove being dismayed at this mischievous mischance knew not what to doe: at last he requested the Catchpole that he would not violently cast him in prison but stay till such time as he could send for a friend to be his surety; and although kindness in a Catchpole be rare, yet was he won with faire words to do him this favour: whereupon Dove desired one to go to this Dast Jarrat, who immediately came with him, and offered himself to be Doves surety.

The officer who never saw this man before, was much amazed at his sight for Jarrat was a great and mighty man of body, of countenance grim, and exceeding big of stature, so that the Catchpole was wonderfully afraid, asking if he could find never a surety, but the Dibel, most fearfully intreating him to conjure him again, and he would do Dove any favour. *What,* will you not take my word, quoth Jarrat? quoth the Catchpole, if it were for any matter in Hell, I would take your word as soon as any Dibels in that place, but seeing it is for a matter on earth, I would gladly have a surety.

*Why,* thou whoreson cricker, (quoth Jarrat) thou maggot-ape, thou spinner, thou paultry spider, dost thou take me for a Dibel? *Sizrab,* take my word I charge thee for this man, or else good-man butter-fly, He make thee repent it. The Officer, while he was in the house said he was content, but as soon as he came into the street, he cried, saying: Help, help good neighbours, or else the Dibel will carry away my prisoner: notwithstanding, there was not one man would stir to be the Catchpoles aide. Which when he saw he took fast hold on Thomas Dove, and would not by any means let him go.

Jarrat seeing this, made no more ado, but coming to the Officer gave him such a fillip on the forehead with his finger, that he fell'd the poor Fleming to the ground: and while he lay in the street stretching his heels, Jarrat took Dove under his arm, and carried him home, where he thought himself as safe, as King Charlemain in Mount alban.

The next morning Jarrat conveyed Dove out of Town, who afterward kept him in the Country, and came no more in the Catchpoles clothes.

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How Duke Robert came wooing to Margaret with the white hand,  
and how he appointed to come and steal her away from her Master.  
Chap. 10.

**T**he beautiful Margaret, who had now dwelt with her Dame the space of four years, was highly regarded, and secretly beloved of many gallant and worthy Gentlemen of the Country, but of two most especially, Duke Robert, and Sir William Ferris. It chanced on a time, that faire Margaret told many other of her Masters folkes, went a hay-making, attired in a red flannel petticoat, and a broad straw hat upon her head, she had also a hay-fork, and in her lap she did carry her break-fast. As she went along Duke Robert, with one of two of his keepers, met with her, whose amiable sight did now anew re-kindle the secret fire of love, which long lay smothering in his heart. Wherefore meeting her so happily, he saluted her thus friendly.

Fairemaid, good morrow, are you walking so diligently to your labour? Seeds must the weather be faire, when the sun shines so clear, and the hay wholesome that is dyed with such splendent rays. Remembered and most noble Duke (quoth she) your harvest-folkes pray for faire weather, and it is the labours comfort to see his work prosper, and the more happy may we count the day that is blessed with your princely presence: but more happy, said the Duke, are they which are conversant in thy company. But let me entreat thee to turn back to thy Masters with me, and commit thy fork to some that are fitter for such toyle: trust me: methinks thy Dame is too much ill advised, in setting thee to such homely business. I must thou canst endure this vile besetting servitude, whose delicate limbs were never framed to probe such painful experiments. Albeit, quoth she it becometh not me to controule your judicial thoughts, yet, were you not the Duke, I would say, your opinions deceived you: though your fair eyes seemed clear, yet I deem them imperfect, if they can before your mind any shadow or spark of beauty in me: But I rather blush because it hath been an old saying, that women are proud to hear themselves praised, that you either speak this to disguise away the time, or to wring from me my too apparent imperfections. But I humbly entreat pardon: too long have I forgotten my business, and betwixt my self, overbold in your presence: and therewith, with a courteous grace, bending her knees to the Courteous Duke, she went forthward to the field, and the Duke to the Town of Gloucester.

When he came thither, he made his keepers great cheer, increas-

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ing them they would giue him respite to be a while with old Gray ; for the twain must haue a game of two, quoth he : and for my safe returne , I gage to you my princely word, that as I am a true knight and a Gentleman, I will return safe to your charge again.

The keepers being content, the Duke departed, and with old Gray goes to the field , to peruse the work-folkes, where while Gray found himself busie in many matters, he took opportunity to talke with Margaret; she toke by his letters before was going to his purpose, quest beforehand the cause of his coming : to whom he saide to this effect.

Sir said, I did long since manifest my love to thee by my letters, tell me therefore, were it not better to be a Dutches, then a drudge : a Lady of high reputation, then a person of simple degree : with me thou mightest liue in pleasure, where here thou wast the dayes forth in pain ; by my love thou should'st be made a Lady of great treasures : where now thou art poore and beggerly ; all manner of delight should then attend on thee , and what costes thy deare delectation, thou should'st haue : wherefore seeing it lies in thy own choice, make thy self happy, by consenting to my suite.

Sir, (quoth she) I confesse your love desires a Ladies fauour, your affection a faithfull friend, such a one as could winne but one heart, and mind of two hearts ; bodies, but sure unit : it is that the Turtle should match with the Eagle, though her love be neuer so pure ; her wings are unfit to mount so high. While Thales good on the stones, he stumbled in a pit. And they that climb unadvisedly, catch a fall suddenly : what abaileth high dignity in time of adversity ? it neither helpeeth the sorow of the heart ; nor remoueth the bodie miserie : as for wealth and treasure, what are they, but fortunes baits to bring men in danger : good for nothing but to make people forget themselves : & whereas you alledge poverty to be a hinder of the deuits comfort, I find it my self contrary, knowing more surety to rest under a simple habit , then a royal Robe ; and verily there is none in the world poore, but they that thinke themselves poore : for such as are endued with content, are rich habing nothing else ; but he that is possessed with riches, without content is most tormented & miserable. Wherefore most noble Duke, albeit I account my self unworthy of your last fauour, yet I would desire you to match your love to your like, and let me rest to my sake, and use my foake for my liuing.

Consider said Margaret, (quoth he) that it lies not in mans power to place his love where he list, being the work of an high deuy. A bird was neuer seen in Pontus, no true love in a fleeing mind : neuer shall remoue the affection of my heart which in nature resem-

bleth

## Of Thomas of Reading.

bleth the Stone Wallon; whose fire can never be cooled: wherefore  
twice spaiden give not obstinate denial where gentle acceptance  
ought to be received.

Fair Sir (quoth he) consider what high displeasure may rise by a  
rash match; what danger a Kings froons may breed, my worthles  
marching with your Royalty, may perhaps regain your liberty,  
and hazard my self; then call to mind how little you should enjoy  
your love; or I my worded Lord.

The Duke at these words made this reply, that if he contented,  
he should not dread any danger. The thunder (quoth he) is driven  
away by ringing of bells, the Lyons loath qualified by a yielding  
body: how much more a Brothers anger with a Brothers entreaty?  
By me he hath received many labours and never yet did he requit  
any one of them: and who is ignorant that the princely Crown which  
adorneth his head is my right; all which I am content he shall en-  
joy, so he requit my kindness. But if he should not, then would I be  
like those men (that eating of the tree of Life) forget the Country  
where they were born, & never more should this time cover my head,  
but with this would I live in a strange Land, being better content  
with an egg in the company, then with all & delicacies in England.

The Duke hearing this, who with many other words was long  
wiled, at last consented, where yielding to him her heart with her  
hand, he departed, appointing to certify her from Caroll Castle,  
what determination he would follow: so taking his leave of Gray,  
he went to his Brothers, and with them passed to Caroll.

Now it is to be remembered, that Sir William Ferris within a  
day or two after came unto Grays house, as it was his ordinary  
custom, but not so much I was for Grays company, as for the mind  
he had to Margaret his Sister: who although he were a married man,  
and had a fair Lady to his wife, yet he laid hard it to the foot of  
Margarits chastity, having with many fair words sought to allure her,  
and by the offer of sundry rich gifts to tempt her: but when he saw,  
that by a hundred denials he could not be rid of him, he now chanced  
on a sudden to give him such an answer, as drove him from a deceit,  
into such a conceit, as never after that time he troubled her.

Sir William Ferris being very importunate to have her grant his  
desire, and when after sundry assaults he gave him still the repulse  
he would needs know the reason why he would not love him, quoth  
he, If thou wilt but consider who he is that seeketh thy favour  
what pleasure he may do thee by his purse, and what credit by his  
countenance, thou would'st never stand on such nice points. If I be

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the friend, who dare be thy foe? and what is he that will once call thy name in question for any thing? therefore sweet girl, be better advised, and refuse not my offer being so large.

Truly sir William (quoth she) though there be many reasons to make me deny your suit, yet is there one above the rest that causes me I cannot love you. Now I pray thee, my loving let me know what quoth he, and I will amend it whatsoever it be. Pardon me sir, said Margaret if I should speak my mind, it would possibly offend you, and do me no pleasure, because it is a defect in nature, which no physick can cure. Sir William hearing her say so, being abashed at her speech, said, Fair Margaret, let me (if I may obtain no more at thy hands) yet I entreat thee to know what this defect should be, I am not wry neckt, crook-legged, stub-footed, lame-handed, nor blear-eyed: what can make this mistake? I never knew any body that took exception at my person before.

And the more soyr am I, quoth she, that I was so malapert to speak it, but pardon me my presumption, good sir William. I would I had been like the stork congreis, then should I never have caused your disquiet. Nay sweet Margaret, quoth he, tell me dear love, I commend thy singleness of heart, good Margaret speak. Good sir William let it rest, quoth she I know you will not believe it when I have revealed it, neither is it a thing that you can help: and yet such is my foolishness had it not been for that, I think verily I had granted your suit ere now. But seeing you urge me so much to know what it is, I will tell you: it is sir your laboured great nose that hangs sagging so loftily to your lips that I cannot find in my heart so much as to kiss you.

What, my nose, quoth he: is my nose so great and I never knew it? certain? I thought my nose to be as comely as any mans: but this it is we are all apt to think well of our selves, and a great deal better then we ought: but let me see, my nose! by the mass 'tis true. I do now feel it my self. Good Lord, how was I blinded before? Hereupon it is certain, that the knight was driven into such a conceit, as none could persuade him but his nose was so great indeed: his Lady, or any other that spake to the contrary, he would say they were flatterers, & that they lied, insomuch that he would be ready to strike some of them that commended a spake well of his nose. If they were men of worship, or any other that contradicted him in his opinion, he would straight way flouted him, and be ready to challenge them the field. He became so ashamed of himself, that after that day he would never go abroad, whereby Margaret was well rid of his company.



of Thomas of Reading.

By a time, a wise and grave Gentleman seeing him grounded in his conceit so strongly gave him Lode counsel, not to contrary him therein, but rather say that he would seek out some cunning Physician to cure him: for said he as Sir William hath taken this conceit of himself, so is he likely never to hear other opinion, till his own conceit doth remove it, the which must be wisely wrought to bring it to pass.

Whereupon the Lady having conferred with a Physician that bare a great name in the Country, he undertook to remove this fond conceit by his skill. The day being appointed when the Physician should come, & the Knight being told thereof, for very joy he would go forth to meet him: when a woman of the Town saw the Knight, having heard what rumour went because of his nose she looked very steadfastly upon him: the Knight, casting his eye upon her, saying her to gaze so totally in his face, with an angry countenance said thus to her. Why, hold not good husband, cannot you get past about your business? The woman being a shrewdly quean, answered him cursedly, No mayer can I not, quoth she. No you do not. What is the cause, said the Knight? Because, quoth she your nose stands in my way: toberewith the Knight being very angry, & abashed, went back against his house.

The Physician being come, he had filled a certain bladder with sheep blood, and conveyed it into his nose, where at the issue of the bladder he had put in a peece of a swans quill through the which the blood should runne out of the bladder so close by his hand, that he holding the Knight by the nose, it might not be perceived, but that it issued thence. All things being prepared, he told the Knight, that by a foul corrupt blood wherewith the being of his nose were over-charged, this impediment did grow, therefore quoth he, to have redress for this disease, you must have a bein opened in your nose, wherby this foul corruption must be taken: whereupon it will follow, that your nose will fall again to his natural proportion, and never shall you be troubled with this grief any more, and thereupon with a gage my self.

How you master Doctor, said the Knight, in my nose so big as you make it? With reverence I may speak it, said the Physician, I will tell the truth, and avoid flattery, I never saw a more misshapen nose so foul to sight. No you now Madam, quoth the Knight this is part that said my nose was as well, as handsome, and as comely a nose as could be.

Alas Sir, quoth she, I spoke it (God wot) because you should have griefe at it, no take my words in all part, neither did it indeed become me to mislike of your nose.

All this he will quickly remedy, said the Physician, have no doubt of it.

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and toke that, he very orderly pricke him in the nose, but not in a vein whereby he might bleed: and presently having a rich finely red uncorrupt quill, the blood ranne into a basin in great abundance: so when the bladder was empty, and the basin almost full, the Physician seemed to close the vein, and asked how he felt his nose, shewing the great quantity of fleshy blood which from thence he had taken.

The knight beholding it with great wonder, said, he thought that no man in the world had been troubled with such abundance of corrupt blood in his whole body, as lay in his misshapen nose and there, which he began to touch and handle his nose, saying, that he felt it mightily asswaged. Immediately a glass was brought where in he might behold himself. Was merry quoth he, now I praise God, I see my nose is come into some reasonable proportion, and I feel my self very well eased of the burthen thereof, but if it continue thus, that's all. I will waite on your worship, said the Physician, for ever being troubled with the like again. Whereupon the knight received great joy, and the Doctor a high reward.

How *Thomas of Reading* was murdered at his Oath house of Colbrook, who also had murdered many before him, and how their wickedness was at length revealed. Chap. II.

**T**homas of Reading having many occasions to come to London as well about his own affairs, as into the Kings business, being in a great office under his majesty, it chanced on a time, that his host and his hostess of Colbrook, who through covetousness had murdered many of the guests, and having every time he came thither great store of his money to lay up, appointed him to be the next fat pig that should be killed: For it is to be understood, that when they plotted the murder of any man, this was alwayes their terme, the man to his wife, and the woman to her husband's wife, there is now a fat pig to be had if you want one. Whereupon he would answer thus, I pray you put him in the hogstail till to morrow. This man, when any came thither alone without others in his company, and they saw he had great store of money.

This man should be then laid in the chamber right over the kitchen, which was a fair Chamber, and better set out then any other in the House: the bedstead therein, though it were little and low, yet was it most cunningly carved, and fast to the eye, the feet thereof were fast nailed to the chamber-floor, in such sort, that it could not in any wise fall, the bed that lay therein was fast sewed to the sides of

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of the Bed-head: Forsober, that part of the chamber wheretur  
this Bed and Bed-head stood, was made in such sort that by the Pul-  
ling out of two Iron pins below in the Mitchen; it was to be let down  
and taken up by a draw-bridge, as in manner of a trap-door: more-  
over in the Mitchen, directly under the place where this should fall,  
was a mighty great caldron, wherein they used to sceth their liquo,  
when they went to brewing. Now, the man appointed for slaughter,  
was laid into this Bed, and in the dead time of the night, when  
they were sound asleep, by plucking out the foresaid Iron pinnes  
down with the man fall out of his Bed into the boiling caldron, and  
all the clothes that were upon him: where being suddenly scalded  
and drenched, he was never able to cry or speak one word.

Then had they a little ladder ever standing ready in the Mitchen;  
by the which they presently mounted into the same Chamber, and  
there closely take away the mans apparel, as also his money: in his  
maile of cap-casse; and then lifting up the said falling floor, which  
hung by hinges, they made it fall as before.

The dead body would they take presently out of the caldron and  
thrust it down the Miter, which ranke lay unto their House, where-  
by they escaped all danger.

Now it in the morning any of the rest of the guests that had sat  
with the murdered man, and the chance to ask for him, as having occa-  
sion to ride the same way that he should have done the good-man would  
stutter, that he had lost a good while before day, and that he him-  
self did see him no more: the house the good-man would also take out  
of the house, and convey him by a back way at his house from his  
house a mile or two, to where himself did always keep the horses full  
charily, and when any day was to be brought from thence, with his  
own hands he would deliver it: then before the horse should go from  
thence, he would disarm him: as if he were along with him, he would  
take him out of the way his ears or cut his mane, or let out one  
of his eyes, and by this means he kept himself unknown.

Now Thomas of Reading, as it is before said, was taken, and kept  
for a few days, he was laid in the same chamber of death, but by reason  
Gray of Gloucester chanced also to come that night he escaped scalding.

The next time he came he was laid down again, but before he fell  
asleep, he was taken by his feet, and some from the wall, and some from  
the ground, and they all came down upon him, and he was buried  
down Thomas Becket's house in waken-chap, and a great number  
more in the same street, and yet (quoth he) the fire is not quenched.

whiche things, when Thomas of Reading heard, he was very

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so rowful, so of the same Becker that day he had receibed a great peece of money, and had left in his house many of his toying oyls and ointments that appertained to the King also: therefor these women may not be would ride back again to London presently, to see how the matter stood; thereupon making himself ready departed. This cross fortune caused his Don to frown, nevertheless the next time (quoth he) will pay for all.

As thus standing God so wrought, that they were prevented thereof likewise by reason of a great fray that hapned in the house betwixt a couple that fell not as discreetly as much as the murderers themselves were enforced to call him up, being a man in great authority, that he might set the house in quietness out of the tobych by means of this quarrel they doubted to lose many things.

Another time when he should have been laid in the same place, he fell so sick, that he requested to have some body to watch with him, to bere he also, they could not having their vile purpose to pass. But hard it is to escape the ill fortune whereunto a man is allotted: for albeit that the next time that he came to London, his horse stumbled and broke one of his legs as he should ride homeward, yet bided he another to hasten his own death, for there is no remedy but he should go to Colebrook that night: but by the way he was dead as a stone, that he could show keep himself in the saddle and when he came nigh to the Town, his nose burst out suddenly a bleeding.

Well, so his Journey he came, and so heavy was his heart that he could eat nor meat, his Don and Mares bearing he was so melancholy, came up to cheer him, saying, I am a Father Colebrook: what ailes you to night? never did I see you thus sad before, I will try please you to have a quart of burn sack: will that good will? (quoth he) and I would to God These Days were here, he would surely make me merry, and we should lack no muck: but I am sorry for the man with all my heart, that he is come to stay behind hand: but alas how much can ebery man say in what god doth it him? As was it is no words can help a man in this case, the man hard need of other relief then so. Let me see: I have but one child in the world, and that is my daughter, and half that I have is hers, the other half my wifes. What then? Shall I be good to no body but them? In conscience, my lord is in too much for a couple to possess, and that is our Religion without thanks: And to whom in charity more to be shown, then to decayed house holders.

Good my Don lend me a pen and inch, and some paper, for I will write a letter unto the poor man straight: and something I will give him:

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him : That almes which a man bestowes with his own hands , he shall be sure to have delivered , & God knowes how long I shall live. With that, his Masters dissemblingly answered, saying, Doubt not, Master Cole, you are like enough by the course of nature, to live many years : God knowes (quoth he) I never found my heart so heavy before. By this time, pen, ink, and paper was brought, setting himself in writing as followeth.

**I**N the name of God, Amen. I bequeath my soul to God, and my body to the ground, my goods equally between my wife *Elisor* & *Isabel* my daughter. Item I give too *Thomas Dove* of *Excester* one hundred pounds, say that is too little, I give to *Thomas Dove* two hundred pounds in money, to be paid unto him presently upon his demand thereof by my said wife and daughter.

He, who say you *Dast* (quoth he) is not this well : I pray you read it. His *Dast* looking thereon, said, why Master Cole, what have you writtten here : you said you would write a letter, but me thinks you have made a will : what need have you to do thus : thanks be to God, you may live many fair years. 'Tis true (quod Cole) if it please God; and I trust this writing cannot shorten my dayes : but let me first have I made a will : Now I promise you I did verily purpose to write a letter : notwithstanding I have writtten that that God put into my mind : but looke once again my *Dast* is it not writtten there, that *Dove* shall have two hundred pounds, to be paid when he comes to demand it : yes indeed, said his *Dast*, well then all is well, said Cole, and it shall go as it is for me, I will not bestow the new writing thereof any more.

Then folding it up, he sealed it, desiring that his *Dast* would send it to *Excester*, he promised that he would, notwithstanding he was not satisfied : but after some pause, he would needs hire one to carry it. And so sitting down sadly in his chaire again, upon a sudden he burst forth weeping : they demanding the cause thereof, he spake as followeth :

So cause of these tears I know : but it comes now into my mind, said Cole, when I set forward this my last journey to *London*, how my daughter took on what a couple we went to have my staff, and I could not be rid of the little baggage a long time. She did so hang about me when her mother had silence, how her away she cryed out me, mainly, O my Father, my Father, I shall never see him again. Alas, pretty soul, said his Masters, this was but mere ignorance in the girl, and it seemeth she is very fond of you. But alas, why should you



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you griebe at this? you must consider that it was but childishness. **I**, it is indeed said Cole, and with that he began to nod. Then they asked him if he would go to bed. He, said he, although I am weary I have no mind to go to bed at all. With that certain musicians of the town came to the chamber, and knowing Master Cole was there, drew out their instruments, and very solemnly began to play.

This music comes very well (said Cole) and when he had listened a while thereunto, he said; methinks these instruments sound like the ring of St. Mary Overies bells, but the base dronens all the rest: and in my eare it goes like a bell that rings a forenons knell: for Gods sake let them leaue off, and bear them this simple reward. The musicians being gone, his Wast asked if now it would please him to go to bed; for (quoth he) it is well neer eleven of the clocke.

With that Cole beholding his Wast and Wastess earnestly, began to start back, saying, what aile you to looke so like pale death: good Lord, what have you done, that your hands are thus bloody: what my hands, said his Wast: why, you may see they are neither bloody nor soul: either your eyes do greatly daze, or else fancies of a troubled mind do delude you.

Alas, my Wast, you may see, said he how weare my wits are, I neuer had my head so idle before; Come, let me drinke once more, and then I will to bed, and trouble you no longer. With that he made himself unready, and his Wastess was very diligent to warme a herchiffe, and put it about his head. Good Lord, said he, I am not sick. I praise God, but such an alteration I find in my self as I neuer did before.

With that the scritch-shole cried pittiously, & anon after the night reben late croaking hard by his window. Iesu haue mercy upon me, quoth he what an ill favoured cry do yonder carrion birds make, and therewithal he laid him down in his bed, from whence he neuer rose again.

His Wast and Wastess, that all this while noted his troubled mind, began to commune betwixt themselves thereof. And the man said, he knew not what were best to be done. By my consent (quoth he) the matter should passe, for I think it is not best to meddle on him. What man (quoth he) saint you now? haue you done so many and do you think at this? Then shewing him a great deal of gold which Cole had left with her, she said, would it not grieue a bodiles heart to lose this? hang the old churle, what would he be no liking any longer? he hath too much, and we haue too little: our husband, let the thing be done, and this is our own.

Her wicked counsell was followed and when they had listened at his chamber-



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chamber-door they heard the man sound asleep: All in still, quoth they, and down into the kitchen they go, their servants being all in bed, and pulling out the Iron pins, down fell the bad, and the man dropt out into the boyling chaldron. He being dead, they bestowd them cast his body into the river, his cloths they made away, and made all things as it should be: but when he came to the stable to convey thence Coles horse, the stable door being open, the horse had got loose, & with a part of the halter about his neck, and draw trussed under his belly, as the Officers had dressed him ore ere, he was gone out at the back-side, which led into a great field joining to the house, and so leaping othens hedges, being a lustie stout horse, had got into a ground where a Mare was grazing, with whom he kept such a coyle, that they got into the high-way, where one of the Town meeting them, knew the Mare, and brought her and the horse to the man that owed her.

In the mean space, the Musicians had been at the Anne, and in requital of their evenings gifts, they intended to give Cole some musick in the morning. The good-man told them he was horse before day: likewise there was a guest in the house that would have had him company to Reading, unto whom the Daff also answered, that he himself set him upon horse back and that he went long agoe. Now came the man that owed the Mare, inquiring up and down, to know if none of them missed a horse, who said no. At the last he came to the sign of the Crane where Cole lay, and calling the Officers, he demanded of them if they lackt none, they said no: Why then said the man, I perceiue my Mare is good for something, for if I send her to the field single, she will come home double thus it passed on all that day and the night following. But the next day after, Coles wife missing that her Husband came not home sent one of her men on horse-back, to see if he could meet him: and if (qd. she) you meet him not bestow this and Colebrooke, ask for him at the Crane, but if you find him not there, then ride to London; for I doubt he is either sick, or else some mischance hath fallen unto him.

The fellows did so, and asking for him at Colebrooke, they answered, he went homeward from thence such a day. The Merchant missing what should become of his Master, and making much inquiry in the Town for him: at length one told him of a horse that was found on the high-way, and no man knew whence he came. He going to see the horse knew him presently, and to the Crane he goes with him. The Daff of the house perceiving this, was blanke and that night fled secretly away. The fellows going unto the Justice, desired his helpe:

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presently after, word was brought that Jarman of the Crane was gone, then all the merchants, he had surely made Cole away: and the apothecaries told what Jarman said to them, when they would have given Colomustick. When the woman being apprehended & examined, confessed the truth, Jarman soon after was taken in a snare, & forrest, he and his wife were both hanged, after they had laid open all their things before & exposed. Also he confessed, that he being a Carpenter made that false sailing Rigger, and how his wife debited it. And how they had murdered by that means 17. persons. And yet notwithstanding all the money which they had gotten thereby, they prospered not, but at their death were found very farre in debt.

When the King heard of this murder, he was for the space of six dayes so tormentful and braby, as he would not hear any suit giving also commandment, that the house should quite be consumed with fire, wherein Cole was murdered, and that no man should build upon that cursed ground.

Coles substance at his death was exceedingly great, he had daily in his house an hundred men-forbants, and 11. maides, he maintained beside shabety two or thre hundred people, spinners and carders, and a great many other house-holders. His wife never after married, and at her death she bequeathed a mighty summe of money toward the maintaining of the new builded Monastery. Her daughter was most richly married to a Gentleman of great worth, by whom she had many children. And some say, that the river wherewith Cole was cast, did ever since carry the name of Cole, being called, The river of Cole, and the Town of Colebridge.

How divers of the Clothiers wives went to the Churching of Suttons, of Salisbury, and of their meriment, Chap. 12.

**S**uttons wife of Salisbury which had lately been delivered of a sonne, against her going to Church, prepared great cheer: at what time Symons wife of Southampton came thither, and so did others others of the Clothiers wives, only to make merrily at this Churching Feast: and whilst these women sat at the Table, Crab, Weasel, and Wren, waiting at the word, and as the old Proverbe speaketh, many women many waxes, to sell for at that time: for there was such pattering that it passed some talk of their husbands stragglings, some showed their maidens stoutness, other some deciphered the coarseness of their garments, some told many tales of their neighbours: and to be brief, there was none of them but would have talked for a whole day.

But

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But when Crab, Weasel, and Wren saw this, they concluded betwixt themselves, that as oft as any of the women had a good bit of meat on their trenchers, they offering a clean one should catch that commodity, and so they did, but the women being wisse in talk marked it not, till at the last one found leisure to miss her meat: whereupon she said that their boldness excused their diligence. Not so, forsooth, said Weasel, there is an hundred holder then two. Same meane, said the woman if you can. A Ale is holder, quoth Crabbe. How will you prove that, said the woman? Because quoth he they will creep under your coats, where we dare not come, and now and then bite you by the buttocks, as if they were beaten. But what becomes of them, quoth the woman: their sweet meat hath some sauce, and their lustiness doth often cost them their lives, therefore take heed. A good warning of a fair woman, said Wren, but I had not thought to find a tolt in a far belly.

The women taking their men to merrye, said it was a sign there was good Ale in the house. That's as fit for a Churching, quoth Weasel, as a cudgel for a curst quean. Thus with pleasant communication and merrye quips they dyed out the time, till the fruit and spice-cakes were set on the board: At what time one of them began to aske the other, if they heard not of the cruel murder of Thomas of Reading? Yes, said the rest, is old Cole murdered? When I pray you was the deed done? The other answered, on Friday last: O good Lord, said the women, how was it done, can you tell?

As report goes, said the other, he was roasted alive. O pittifull was he roasted? Indeed I heard one say, a man was murdered at London, and that he was sodden at an Inholders house, and served it to the guests in head of pork.

Ed Neighbour, it was not at London, said another: I hear say 'twas coming from London, at a place called Cole-brook, and it is reported for truth, that the Inholder made pies of him, and penny pasties, yea and made his own servant eat a peice of him. But I pray your good Neighbour, can you tell how it was known? Some say, that a boyle revealed it.

How by the mass (quoth Grays wife) it is told one of my Neighbours that a certaine boyle did speak, and said great things. What sounds like a lie, said one of them. Why, said another, may not a boyle speak, as well as William Ale? It may be, but it is unlikely, said the third. But where was the boyle when he spoke? As some say, quoth she, he was in the field, and had dyed out of the hole, where he stood fast locked in mighty strong Iron fetters, which he

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burn in pieces, as they had been straws, and broke down the stable door, and so got away. The good man coming in at these speeches, asked what that was they talked of. Harry, said his wife, we hear that Cole of Reading is murdered: I pray you is it true. I said Sardon, it is true, that this villain his wife murdered him in whose house the man had spent many a pound: but did they make pies of him said his wife: No, no, quoth her husband he was scalded to death in a boiling caldron, and afterward thron into a running river that is hard by. But good husband, how was it known: By his horse, quoth he. What, did he tell his master was murdered: could the horse speak English: Iesus what a foolish woman are you quoth he, to ask such a question: but to end this, you are all heartily welcome, good Neighbours, and I am sorry you had no better cheer. So with thanks the women departed. Thus have ye heard the divers tales that will be spread abroad of an evil deed.

How Duke Robert deceived his keepers, and got from them, how he met fair Margaret and in carrying her away, was taken, for the which he had his eyes put out. Chap. 13.

**D**uke Robert, having as you heard obtained the love of fair Margaret, did now call in his mind how he might delude his keepers, and carry her quite away. In the end he being absolutely resolved what to do, sent his letter unto her wherein he requested, that she would be ready to meet him in the Forest, betwixt Cardiffe and Gloucester.

The young Lady having secretly received his message, unknown to her father or Dame, in a morning betime she made her self ready and got forth, walking to the appointed place, where her love should meet her.

During her abode there, and thinking long ere her love came, she entered into divers passions, which indeed presaged some disaster fortune to follow. O my dear love, said she, how slack art thou in performing thy promise! why do not thy deedes agree with thy inditing: for these are thy words, Come my dear Margaret, and with Cupids swift wings flye to thy friend, be now as nimble in thy footing, as the Camels of Bactria, that runne an hundred miles a day. I will waite and stay for thee, so I stay not too long. There is no Country like Austria for ambling horses, and so carry the I have got one.

O my love (quoth she) here am I, but where art thou: O why dost thou play the trewant with time, who like the wind, flies away  
away

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away unseen: an ambling gennet of Spaine is so slow to scize our  
turnes. A flying horse for flying Lohers were most meet. And thus  
casting many looks thorough the bushing shades, up and down to  
espie him, she thought every minute an houre, till she might see him:  
sometimes she would wish her self a bird, that she might flie through  
the aire to meet him, or a pretty squirrel to clime the highest tree to  
descrie his coming: but finding her wishes vain, she began thus to  
excuse him, and perswaded her self saying, How much to blame am  
I, to find fault with my friend? Alas, men that lack their liberty,  
must come when they can, not when they would, nor prisoners can  
nor do what they desire, and then why should I be so harsh? There-  
fore if safely I may lay me down, I will beguile unquiet thoughts  
with quiet sleep: it is said that Galien breeds no serpents, nor doth  
Englande foster the purple worme: therefore without hurt  
I hope I may rest a while.

Thus leading faire Margaret in a sweet  
slumber, he will returne to Duke Robert, who had thus plotted his  
escape from his keepers.

Having liberty of the King to hawke and hunt, he determined on  
a day as he should follow the chase, to leave the hounds to the hart,  
and the hunters to their homes, and being buisie in their sport, him-  
self would flie, which he performed at that time when he appointed  
Margaret, to meet him, and so coming to the place, his horse all in  
a sweate, and himself in a sweat, finding his horse asleepe, he awaked  
her with a kiss, saying, arise faire Margaret, now comes the time  
wherein thou shalt be made a Queene: and presently sitting her on  
horse back, he posted away.

Now when the keepers saw they had lost his company, and that at  
the killing of the game, he was not present, they were among them-  
selves in such a mutiny, that they were ready one to stabbe another.  
It was the fault, said one, that he thus escaped from us, that had  
more mind of the pleasure, then of the prison, and by this means  
we are all undone. The other said as much to him, that he had  
thought he had followed him in the chase: but labbing at last this  
contention, the one polled up to the King, to let the order be called up  
and down the Countrey to search for the Duke: thus having killed his  
horse in travelling, was most unhappily met on foot with faire Marg-  
aret, whom he could come to see, and yet he might say many a time  
another. But when he stopped his keepers came to take him, he was  
fled Margaret to make shif for her self, and to find to escape them:  
But the being of a contrary mind, said she, would live and yet to take him.

The Duke seeing himself ready to be surprized, drew out his sword,







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belous tozoth, gibing great charge and commandment when he was taken, that both his eyes should be put out, and he kept in prison till his dying day; appointing also that the Maide should lose her life for presumption of loving him. This matter being rumored over all England, it came to the eares of Gray and his wife, who hearing that Margaret also was there in prison appointed to be, the good aged woman never rested till she came to the Court, where kneeling befoze the King with many tears she besought his Majestie to spare the Maides life, saying, Most royal King consider, I humbly beseech you that the Duke your Brother was able to intice any woman to his love: much moze a filly Maide, especially promising her marriage to make her a Lady, a Dutches, or a Queen, who would refuse such an offer, when at the instant they might get both a Princely Husband and a high dignitie? If death be a Lobers guerdon, then what is due to hatred: I am in my heart perswaded, that had my poore Margaret thought it would have bred your highness displeasure, she would never have bought his love so dear: had your grace made it known to your Commons that it was unlawful for any to marry the Duke your Brother, who would have attempted such an action, if she had wilfully disobeyed your Graces commandement she might have been thought worthy of death; but seeing ignorantly she offended, I beseech your Grace to recall the sentence, and let me still enjoy my Servant, for never will I rise, till your Majestie have granted my petition. His Highness, who was of nature merciful, beholding the womans abundant tears, took pittie on her, and granted her sute: which being obtained, she went home in all hast possible. And from thence, she with her Husband taking their journey to Cardiffe Castle, they came at that very instant when the Maide was led toward her death, who went in most joyful sort to the same, saying, that they were not worthy to be accounted true Lobers, that were not willing to die for love: and so with a smiling countenance she passed on, as if she had eaten Apium Rifus, which causeth a man to die laughing: but her Dame Gray seeing her, fell about her neck, and with many kisses embraced her saying, Thou shalt not die my wench, but go home with me; and for thy delibery, behold here the Kings letters, and with that she delivered them up to the Governour of the Castle: who reading them found these words written: We pardon the Maides life, and grant her liberty, but let her not pass, till she see her Lobers eyes put out, which we will have you do in such sort, that only the light may perish, but the eye continue fair, for which cause I have

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sent down Doctor Piero, that he may execute the same. The Governour of the Castle having read the Kings letter said thus to the Warden: The Kings Majestie hath pardoned thy life, and allotted thee liberty, but you must not pass before you see your Lovers eyes put out. O Sir, said the Warden, mistake not your self they are my eyes that should be put out, and not the Dukes: as his offence grew by my means, so I being guilty, ought to receive the punishment. The Kings Commandement must be fulfilled said the Governour: and therewithal Duke Robert was brought forth, who hearing that he must lose his eyes said thus: The noble mind is never conquered by grief, nor overcome by mischance: but as I have renewed his age by eating the Serpent, so doth a man lengthen his life with debouring sorrow: my eyes have offended the King and they must be punished, my heart is in as great fault why is not that killed: The Kings Majestie, said the Governour spares your life of mere love, and only is content to satisfy the Law with the losse of your eyes, wherefore take in good part this punishment, and think you have deserved greater than is granted. With this Margaret cryed out saying. O my dear Love, most gentle Prince, well may you wish that I had never been born, who by seeing of me must lose your sight; but happy should I count my self, if it so please the King, that I might redeem the eyes with my life: or else, that being an equal offender, I might receive equal punishment: hadst thou sustained this smart for some Duke or Prince of high blood, it might with the more ease be born, but to indure it for such a one as I, it must needs cause a treble grief to be increased. Content thee, fair Margaret, said the Duke: for honour ought to be given to vertue, and not to riches: for glory, honour, nobility and riches without vertue are but clothes of maliciousness. And now let me take my leave of thy beauty, for never must I behold thy face: notwithstanding I account my eyes well lost, in that I do forgo them for so peerles a paragon. Now fair heavens farewell, the Sunne, Moon, and Starres shall I in this world never behold again; and farewell also the fruitful earth, well may I feel thee, but those poor windows of my body are now denyed to shew thee any more: and though the world hath ever been my foe, yet will I bid thee farewell too, and farewell all my friends; whilles I live here in this world, I must suppose to sleep, and wake when I come in heaven, where I hope to see you all again. Yet had it pleased the King, I had rather have lost my life then my eyes. Alas, why, what is it but a flowre, a bubble in the water, a spanne long, and full of misery? of such small account is life, that every Shoulders will sell it for six pence.

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And trust me, I do now detest life, worse than a goat doth hate Baskin.

With that the Doctor prepared his instrument, and being ready to set to the Duks eyes, he said, O stay Master Doctor, till I have conveyed my Lovers countenance down into my heart: Come hither my sweet, and let me gibe thee my last kiss, while mine eyes may direct me to thy cherr lips. Then embracing her in his arms, he said. O that I might gibe thee a kiss of xx. years long and to satisfie my greedy eyes with thy sight, yet it doth somewhat content me, because thou art present at my punishment, that I may hold thee by the hand, to comfort my heart at the sudden pische of my eye. This being said, the Doctor perfozmed his duty; and so put out the chrital sight: at what time Duke Robert started up, and with a most manly courage said, I must thank his Majestie, that though he depiteth me of my sight, yet he leaveth me eyes to weep for my sinnes. But so soon as Margaret beheld the deed, she fell down in a swoone, and much ado her Dame had to recober her life: which when the Duke understood, he was wondrous woe, groping for her with his bleeding eyes, saying, O where is my love: for God sake have regard to her. And I pray you must heartily good good-wife Gray, let her have this labour for my sake, that she may be used kindly. And tolt that the Keepers led him into the Castle, and Margaret was carried away wondrous sick and ill: but her Dame was most tender ober her; and would suffer her to lacke nothing. When she was somewhat well recovered, her Dame Gray set her on horseback: and at her coming to Gloucester there was no small joy.

How *Thomas Dove* being fallen to decay, was forsaken of his friends and despised of his Servants: and how in the end he was raised again through the liberality of the Clothiers. Chap. 14.

Such as seek the pleasure of the world, follow a shadow where in is no substance: and as the adder Apsis tickleth a man to death so doth vain pleasure flatter us, till it makes us forget God and consume our substance as by *Tom Dove* it is apparent, who had through a free heart, and a liberal mind wasted his wealth: and looke how his goods consumed, so his friends fled from him: And albeit he had been of great ability, and thereby done good unto many, yet not a man regarded him in his poverty, but casting a scornful countenance upon him, they passed by him with slender salutation: neither would any of his former acquaintance do him good, or pleasure him the value of a farthing; his former friendship done to them was quite forgot and he made of as much account, as *Job* when he sat on the dunghill.

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dungbil. Now, when his wicked Serbants saw him in this disgrace with the world, they on the other side began to disdain him. Notwithstanding that he (to his great cost) had long time brought them up, yet did they nothing regard it, but behind his back in most scornful sort derided him, and both in their words and actions greatly abused him, reverence they would do none unto him, but when they spake, it was in such malapert sort, as would grieve an honest mind to hear it. At last it came to pass, that breaking out into meer contempt they said they would stay no longer with him, and that it was a great discredit for them, to serve a person so beggerly: whereupon they thought it convenient to seek for their benefit elsewhere. When the distressed man found the matter so plain, being in great grief, he spake thus unto them. How do I find to my sorrow, the small trust that is in this false world. Why, my Masters (quoth he) have you so much forgotten my former prosperity, that you nothing regard my present necessity? In your wants I forsook you not, in your sickness I left you not, nor despised you in your great poverty: it is not unknown, though you do not consider it, that I took some of you up in the high-way, otherwise from your needy parents, and brought the rest from meer beggary to a house of bounty; where from paltry hopes, I brought you up to mans estate, and bade to my great cost, taught you a trade, whereby you may live like men. And in requital of all my courtesie, cost and good will, will you now on a sudden forsake me? is this the best recompence that you can find in your hearts to pay me? This is farre from the minds of honest Serbants. The fierce Lyon is kind to those that do him good, pluck but one thorne out of his foot, and for the same he will shew manifold favours. The wild Bull will not otherthow his Damm: and the very Dragons are dutiful to their nourishers. We better advised and call to mind, I beseech you, that I have not plucked a thorn out of your side, but drawn your whole bodies out of perils, when you had no means to helpe your selves, I only was your support, and he, that when all other forsook you, I did comfort you in all your extremities.

And what of all this, quoth one of them? because you took us up poor, doth it therefore follow, that we must be your Slaves? We are youngmen, and for our part, we are no further to regard your profit, then it may stand with our preferment: Why should we lose our benefit to pleasure you? If you taught us our trade, and brought us up from hopes to men, you had our service for it, whereby you made no small benefit, if you had as well used it, as we got it. But if you be poor you may thank your selfs, being a just scourge for your prodigality, and

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and it is my opinion plaine, that to stay with you, is the next way to make us like you, neither able to help our selves, nor our friends: therefore in brief come pay me my wages, for I will not stay, let the rest do as they will, for I am resolved. Well said his Master, if needs thou wilt be gone, here is part of thy wages in hand, and the rest as soon as God sends it, thou shalt have it: and with that, turning to the rest, he said, Let me yet entreat you to stay, and leave me not altogether destitute of help: by your labours must I live, and without you I know not what to do. Consider therefore my need and regard my great charge. And if for my sake you will do nothing, take compassion of my poor children; stay my sliding foot, and let me not utterly fall, through your sliding from me. Thus (quoth they) what do you talk to us: we can have better wages, and serve a man of credit, where our fare shall be far better, and our gains greater: therefore the world might count us right covetous, if we should forsake our profit, to pleasure you: therefore adieu, God send you more money, for you are like to have no more men: and thus they departed. When they were gone, within a while after they met one with another, saying, What cheer? are you all come away? in saied I, what should we do else, quoth they: but hearest thou Azra, hast thou got thy wages? Not yet saith the other, but I shall have it, and that is as good, tis but x. shillings. Saith thou so (saied he) now I see thou art one of God Almightyes idiots: why so, saied the other? Because (quoth he) thou wilt be fed with shales: but he tell thee one thing, twere better for thee quickly to arrest him, lest some other do it before, and there be nothing left to pay thy debt: hold thy peace fair words make fools saue, and it is an old saying, One bird in hand is worth two in bush: if thou dost not arrest him presently, I will not give thee two pence for thy x. shillings. How shall I come by him, quoth the other? give me but two pots of Ale, and I will betray him, saied he. So they being agreed, this smother, far'n Judas comes to his late Master, and told him that a friend of his at the doore would speak with him. The un mistrusting man thinking no evil, went to the doore, where presently an Officer arrested him at his mans suite. The poor man seeing this, being stricken into a sudden sorrow, in the grief of his heart spake to this effect: Ah thou lewd fellow, art thou the first man that seeks to augment my misery? Have I thus long given thee bread, to breed my overthrow? and nourish thee in thy need, to work my destruction? Full little did I think, when thou so often diddest dip thy false fingers in my dish, that I gave scope to my chiefest foe: but what boot complaints in these extremes? So

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toise, quoth he, unto my Neighbour, and see if thou canst get any of them to be baile. But in vaine was her paines spent. Then he sent to his kinsfolks, and they denied him: to his Brother and he would not come at him, so that there was no shift, but to prison he must: but as he was going, a Messenger met him with a letter from Master Cole, wherein as you heard, he had promised him two hundred pounds: which when the poor man read he greatly rejoiced, and shewing the same to the Officer, he was content to take his own word. Whereupon Thom. Dove went presently to Reading, where at his coming he found all the rest of the Clothiers lamenting Coles untimely death, where the woful widow paid him the money, by which deed all the rest of the Clothiers were induced to do something for Dove. And thereupon one gave him ten pounds, another twenty, another thirty pounds, to begin the world anew: and by this means (together with the blessing of God) he grew into greater credit then euer he was before. And riches being thus come upon him, his former friends came fawning unto him and when he had no need of them, then euer one was ready to proffer him kindness. His wicked servants also that disowned him in his distress were after glad to come creeping unto him, entreating with cap and knee for his favour and friendship. And albeit he seem'd to forgive their trespasses done against him, yet he would often say he would never trust them for a straw. And thus he euer after lived in great wealth and prosperity, doing much good to the poor, and at his death, left to his children great lands.

How fair Margaret made her estate and high birth known unto her Master and Dame: and for the entire love she bore to Duke Robert, made a vow never to marry, but became a Nun in the Abbey at Gloucester. Chip. 15.

**A**fter fair Margaret was come again to Gloucester, never did she behold the clear day, but with a weeping eye: and so great was the sorrow which she conceived for the loss of Duke Robert her faithful Lober, that she utterly despised all the pleasures of this life, and at last bewrayed her self in this sort to her Dame: O my good Master and Dame, too long have I dissembled my parentage from you, whom the froward destinies do pursue to deserved punishment. The woful Daughter am I of the unhappy Earle of Hereford, who euer since his banishment, have done nothing but dation mischance after me: wherefore let me entreat you (dear Master and Dame) to have your good-wills, to spend the remnant of my life in some blessed Monastery. When Gray and his wife heard this, they wondred



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wounded greatly, as well at her birth, as at her strange demand. Whereupon her Dame knew not how to call her, whether Spaiden or Adam, but said, O good Lord are you a Lady, and I know it not? I am sorry that I knew it not before. But when the folkes of the house heard that Margaret was a Lady, there was no small alteration: and moreover her Dame said, that she had thought to have had a match between her and her Son: and by many perswasions did seek to withhold her from being a Nun, saying in this manner: What Margaret thou art young and fair, the world (no doubt) hath better fortune for thee, whereby thou maist leaue an honourable issue behind thee, in whom thou maist live after death. These and many other reasons did they alledge unto her, but all in vaine: she making this reply, Who knows not that this world giueth the pleasure of an houre, but the sorow of many dayes? for it payeth euer that which it promiseth, which is nothing else but continual trouble and vexation of the mind. Do you think, if I had the offer and choice of the mightiest Princes of Christendom, that I could match my self better then to my Lord Iesus? No, no, he is my husband, to whom I yeild my self, both body and soul, giuing to him my heart, my love and my most firme affection: I haue ouerlong loved this vile world: therefore I beseech you farther dissuade me not. When her friends by no means could alter her opinion, the matter was made known to his Majesty, who against the time that she should be receiued into the Monastery, came to Gloucester with most part of his Nobility to honour her action, with his princely presence. All things being therefore prepared, the young Lady was in most princely wise attired in a gowne of pure white sattin, her kirtle of the same embrodered with gold about the skirts in most curious sort, her head was garnished with gold, pearles, and precious stones, habing her hair like brydes of burnisht gold hanging down behind in the manner of a princely bryde, about her Phoy neck Jewels of inestimable price were hung, and her handwrests were compassed about with bracelets of bright-shining Diamonds. The streets thorow the which she should pass were pleasantly deckt with green oaken boughs. Then came the young Lady most like an heavenly Angel out of her Fathers house, at what time all the bells in Gloucester were solemnly rung: she being led betwixt the Kings Majesty habing on his Royal Robes, and Imperial Crown and the chief Bishop wearing his Mitre, in a Cup of cloth of gold, over her head a Canopy of white silk, fringed about in princely manner: before her went a hundred Priests singing, and after her all the chief Ladies of the Land: then all the wises and

maids

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knights of Gloucester followed, with an innumerable sort of people on every side standing to behold her. In this sort she passed on to the cathedral Church where she was brought to the Runty-gate. The Lady Abbess received her: where the beautiful Maiden kneeling down, made her prayer in sight of all the people, then with her own hands she undid her Virgins fair gown and took it off, and gave it away to the poor: after that, her kirtle, then her jewels, bracelets and rings, saying, farewell the pride and banity of this world. The ornaments of her head were the next she gave away: and then was she led on one side, where she was stripped, and in stead of her smock of soft silkes, had a smock of rough hair put upon her.

Then came one with a pair of sheares, and cut off her golden coloured lockes, and with dust and ashes all bestrewn her head and face. Which being done, she was brought again into the peoples sight bare foot and bare leg'd, to whom she said: Now farewell the world, farewell the pleasures of this life, farewell my Lord the King, and to the Dukes farewell, now shall my eyes weep for my former transgressions, and no more shall my tongue talke of banity: farewell my good Maister and Dame, and farewell all good people.

With which words she was taken away, and never after seen abroad. When Duke Robert heard thereof, he desired that at his death his body might be buried in Gloucester: in that Town, quoth he, where first my clear eyes beheld the heavenly beauty of my Love, and where for my sake she forsooke the world: which was performed accordingly.

The King also at his death requested to be buried at Reading, for the great love he bare to that place, among those Clothiers, who living were his hearts comfort. Gray dying wondrous wealthy, gave land to the Monastery, wherinto Margaret was taken. William Fitzallen also dyed a most rich man, having builded many houses for the poor, whose Son Henry after was the first Mayor that was ever in London.

Sutton of Salisbury did also at his death much good, and gave an hundred li. to be yearly sent to poor weavers of the Town, to the worlds end. Simon of Southampton gave a most bounteous gift towards the building of a Monastery at Winchester. Hodgkins of Wallisfar did also great good, and so did Cuthbert of Randal. Who had married xlii. couples out of his owne house, giving each of them x. li. to begin the world withal. Martin Brian of Spanchester gave toward the building of a free-school in Spanchester, a great mass of money. And thus (gentle Reader) have I finished my story of these worthy men, desiring thee to take my paines in good part, which will ingage me to great matters, perceiving this courteously accepted.

